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Arab-Israeli Talks

PLO Official Sets Conditions for Talks

NC0803123094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal has stressed that the PLO insists that Israel submit a written document in which it commits itself to withdrawing from Gaza and Jericho no later than 12 April in accordance with the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, otherwise there will be no guarantee for the success of the peace process. In a statement to MENA today, Kamal said that he and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa yesterday evening discussed the Egyptian and Palestinian efforts with the United States and the European Union intended to have the UN Security Council pass a resolution condemning the massacre at the al-Ibrahimi Mosque and protecting the Palestinian people.

Kamal said that the Palestinian leadership insists on a Security Council resolution even if the United States were to veto it. He pointed out that the Palestinian leadership conveyed its demands to Israel and that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's envoy, perhaps Jacques Neriya or an Israeli minister, will convey the Israeli response to these demands to the Palestinian leadership in Tunis in the next 24 hours after the mini-meeting of the Israeli cabinet.

MENA has learned that the Palestinian leadership notified Israel through Israeli envoy Neriya of a number of conditions and principles with which Israel must comply for resumption of the peace talks. Foremost among these conditions are:

1. Providing international protection throughout the occupied territories and not only in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area, where the temporary Palestinian self-rule will begin, as well as Hebron, as Israel has offered.

2. Ensuring that this protection will be real and applied not only by UN observers as Israel wants.

Kamal said that France, Russia, Norway, and Spain have offered to participate in international protection, either something belonging to the United Nations or through special multi-nationality agreements with the guarantee of the two cosponsors of the peace process—the United States and Russia. He noted that Britain expressed readiness to participate in a UN observers force.

MENA has learned that the PLO does not ask that these forces be heavily armed, but only lightly armed to defend themselves. He noted that the third Palestinian demand is the dismantling of four Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including the Bet Hadasa settlement in the center of Hebron and the departure of 400 extremist Israeli settlers who live inside the Arab city of Hebron.

Ambassador Sa'id Kamal said that the Palestinian leadership demands that the issue of settlements be discussed at the negotiating table directly after Israeli withdrawal in accordance with the text of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles signed in Washington on 13 September 1993, and not within the two years as the Israeli side is demanding.

It is worth noting that the Declaration of Principles stipulated discussing the issue of the settlements as soon as possible.

The Palestinian ambassador in Cairo clarified that the fourth Palestinian demand is to disarm all Israeli settlers and prevent them from carrying weapons outside their settlements. Their protection should be taken on by the Israeli forces in accordance with the security arrangements that were agreed upon during the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

It is noteworthy that Israel declared its approval for disarming some extremists from the Kakh and Gush Emunim groups, who are considered the radical extremists. This will not include the rest of the settlers, though.

The fifth Palestinian demand is to form a neutral investigative committee to establish responsibility for the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre and punish those responsible or compensate the victims of that massacre in moral and material ways.

The Palestinian side maintains that the massacre was committed not by just one Israeli extremist from the Kakh movement; many individuals from the Israeli forces took part in it also.

MENA has learned that the Palestinian leadership is not expected to accept holding a meeting between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin without meeting the Palestinian demands and without international guarantees, especially as regards protecting the Palestinian people.

Palestinian sources affirmed that the negotiations cannot be resumed without setting the appropriate atmosphere for them—something that will not be realized except through international protection for the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, especially since the situation has now become very volatile as a result of the frustration the Palestinian people are feeling and the emergence of trends and conflicts demanding reaction and revenge for the death of the Palestinian martyrs.

Rabin, 'Arafat Hold Telephone Conversation

TA0903054794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 9 Mar 94

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin yesterday held a telephone conversation with PLO Chief Yasir 'Arafat. This was the two men's second telephone conversation in two days.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the talk was held following a consultation held at the prime minister's office, in which an effort was made to draft answers to the PLO's queries, which had been presented as a precondition for renewing the negotiations.

Our correspondent adds that the appropriate conditions for resuming the negotiations have not been created as yet, but there is satisfaction in Jerusalem about the renewal of a direct link with the PLO. [passage omitted]

More on Rabin-'Arafat Talk

TA0903072894 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 9 Mar 94

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal]

[Text] The resolution about to be endorsed by the UN Security Council is one the PLO has been anticipating. The issue of Jerusalem—namely, the clause which applies the Geneva Convention to the territories, including Jerusalem—is the most crucial article of that resolution. Israel objects to the clause, but it is expected to be endorsed nevertheless, since the United States will probably abstain on this clause, rather than veto it.

The resolution denouncing the Hebron massacre, which the Security Council will debate tonight, will pave the way for renewing the negotiations. Political sources in Jerusalem have said that the clause incorporating Jerusalem in the territories is an achievement for the Palestinians, and within a few days, it will pave the way to direct contacts toward the resumption of negotiations. The contacts will address the steps Israel is to take in the wake of the Hebron massacre to secure the PLO return to the negotiations.

For Israel, the Jerusalem clause is disagreeable, but it is neither new nor very significant. It is disagreeable, but not tragic, Foreign Ministry sources said.

Last night, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin held his second telephone conversation with Yasir 'Arafat in two days. Rabin told 'Arafat that Israel will not accept all the demands 'Arafat had conveyed to political adviser Jacques Neriya as a condition for resuming the negotiations. Rabin urged 'Arafat to return to the negotiating table. 'Arafat replied: Not yet. It is believed that after the UN Security Council passes a denouncing resolution, a senior-level meeting—probably between Peres and Mahmud 'Abbas, possibly between Rabin and 'Arafat—will be held within a few days, heralding the delegations' return to intensive talks on the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

Rabin's Consultations on PLO Demands Detailed

TA0903073994 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 9 Mar 94 pp 1, 2

[Report by Moti Bassok]

[Excerpt] In telephone conversations with the PLO yesterday, Israel suggested a summit meeting between Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and a senior Palestinian figure, at which the PLO's requests made in the wake of the Cave of the Patriarchs massacre would be discussed in an effort to resume the peace process.

It is believed in Jerusalem that the Palestinian reply will be received in the coming days, but not before the UN Security Council passes a resolution on the massacre. The PLO hopes the Council will endorse some of its demands concerning the safety of territories Palestinians. Several telephone conversations were held yesterday between Jerusalem and PLO-Tunis and between Jerusalem and the U.S. and Egyptian foreign ministries.

In addition, two meetings were held in Jerusalem regarding Israel's replies to the PLO demands made in the wake of the Hebron massacre as presented in Yasir 'Arafat's meeting with Jacques Neriya, the prime minister's political adviser, in Cairo on 7 March.

The first meeting was a private conversation between Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Minister Peres. The second meeting was also attended by Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq, his deputy, Amnon Shahaq, IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Planning Branch Chief 'Uzi Dayan, Jacques Neriya, and Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir. This forum had also met on the night of 6 March, when it drafted the guidelines for Neriya's Cairo mission.

It was stated at yesterday's consultation that 'Arafat had presented reduced demands in his meeting with Neriya. For instance, the PLO demand to prohibit settlers from carrying arms throughout the territories was replaced by a demand that the settlers should be permitted to carry arms only inside the settlements; instead of the demand to deploy an armed international force throughout the territories, the updated demand was that an unarmed force should be deployed in Gaza, Jericho, and Hebron. (Israel is willing to accept an unarmed international force in Gaza and Jericho in accordance with the Declaration of Principles [DOP].)

The Palestinians demanded that Israel adhere verbatim to the DOP, withdrawing from the Gaza Strip and Jericho no later than 13 April 1994, even if the PLO-Israeli withdrawal accord is not finalized by that date. The Palestinians further demanded—contrary to the DOP—that the talks on settlements, including Hebron, be launched immediately after the withdrawal.

Contrary to the agreement reached in the 'Arafat-Neriya meeting that an Israeli envoy would convey the Israeli replies to Tunis, it was decided in yesterday's consultations at the prime minister's bureau in Jerusalem that no such envoy would be dispatched. The replies were communicated via the telephone. It was decided to propose to the Palestinians to hold a summit meeting between Minister Peres and a senior Palestinian figure. No PLO response was received yesterday.

Also yesterday, Peres met in his Jerusalem bureau with seven Palestinian journalists representing five East Jerusalem newspapers: AL-QUDS, AL-NAHAR, AL-TALI'AH, AL-MANAR, and THE JERUSALEM TIMES. Three days ago Peres was interviewed by MBC, the Saudi television network. In yesterday's meeting, Peres said that with the implementation of the DOP, Israel and the Palestinians could establish a new reality. [passage omitted]

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 4 Mar

NC0903110594

[Editorial Report] The following review of the 4 March issue of Cairo AL-SHA'B summarizes articles that are Islamic in nature.

CONTENTS:

1. Popular, Student Demonstrations Condemn Hebron Massacre
2. Lawyers Association, Professional Unions Urge Boycott, Reject

Normalization
3. Information Says IDF Chiefs Preplanned Massacre
4. Islamic Group Claims Operations To Avenge Massacre
5. Party Secretary Expects Islamic Victory Against Injustice,

Rulers' Corruption

POPULAR, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS CONDEMN HEBRON MASSACRE

The 4 March edition of AL-SHA'B, mouthpiece of the opposition Labor Party, is almost entirely devoted to local reaction to the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre.

A 1,000-word report on page 1 by 'Abd-al-Rahman Isma'il and Mu'tazz al-Hadidi gives a detailed account of the "massive demonstration" involving tens of thousands of members of the Islamic current in al-Tahrir Square in central Cairo on 3 March. The report notes that demonstrators burned the Israeli flag, condemned the "Zionists," called on the government to expel the Israeli ambassador, close the Embassy, and abrogate the Camp David Accord, and urged Arab rulers to stop dealing with "Zionists." The report also notes that demonstrators hurled stones at the police, who were ordered to "fire live and rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse demonstrators." The security forces arrested hundreds and attacked citizens brutally with clubs, according to the report.

Under the headline "Week of Anger in Egypt," a page 2 feature carries several reports on popular and student demonstrations and rallies criticizing the "slack Egyptian and Arab official stance on the Hebron massacre," and calling for closing the "Zionist" embassy.

A feature entitled "Revenge on the Zionists Is a pan-Arab and Islamic Duty" appears on pages 4-5, including more reports of a week of demonstrations at the universities of Cairo, Alexandria, 'Ayn Shams, al-Azhar, and Hulwan and several other reports about popular rallies to support the massacre victims and denounce such crimes.

LAWYERS ASSOCIATION, PROFESSIONAL UNIONS URGE BOYCOTT, REJECT NORMALIZATION

On page 11, the paper publishes a boxed 150-word "statement by the Lawyers Association," which calls on Arab and Islamic states to "adopt a unified stance and demand international protection for the Palestinian people." The statement calls on Arab states to withdraw from the peace talks now that the incident has uncovered "the aggressive nature of the Israeli Government and people and proved that Israel is not serious about seeking peace." The statement also appeals to Arab and Islamic states to "stand firmly against the normalization process with Israel and to stop all kinds of dealings with it."

Page 12 features a framed 200-word statement by "The coordination Committee of the Egyptian Professional Unions," which urges Arab and Islamic states to "maintain the full boycott of the usurping Zionist enemy" and "reject all forms of normalization." The statement calls on the Egyptian Government to "expel the Zionist ambassador and close the embassy of the criminal Jews." It calls on the PLO and Arab governments to withdraw immediately from the "farcical talks that are led by the United States, the major supporter of Zionist terrorism."

INFORMATION SAYS IDF CHIEFS PLANNED MASSACRE

A 200-word report by Mahmud Bakri on page 3 cites "information" obtained by the paper that Israeli Army chiefs planned the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre.

ISLAMIC GROUP CLAIMS OPERATIONS TO AVENGE MASSACRE

A 100-word report on page 7 cites an Islamic Group statement claiming responsibility for detonations in retaliation for the Hebron massacre.

PARTY SECRETARY EXPECTS ISLAMIC VICTORY AGAINST INJUSTICE, RULERS' CORRUPTION

In a 4,000-word article on page 2, Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn writes that the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre is a warning to every Arab and Muslim that "Israel does not develop missiles and nuclear bombs to use against Palestinians in the territories, but to threaten the Arab nation, particularly Egypt, if they dare disobey the orders or raise their heads in pride."

Addressing the United States, Husayn says: "We will not be fooled by your denunciations, even if the Security

Council issues a strongly worded resolution condemning the enemy (it will not do), because words are no longer enough." He warns "our corrupt rulers" that the United States will not save them if the masses decide to punish and overthrow them, noting that popular demonstrations prove that "Egypt will not lead the march of capitulation" and that it will continue to be "the fort of the Arabs and Muslims."

Husayn refutes the view that the world has joined forces against Islam and Muslims because, according to him, that view prevailed "in the first spell of dizziness after the sudden, thunderous collapse of the Soviet bloc." Things are different today and will keep changing daily, because yesterday's allies of the Western bloc are no longer a bloc, he says. He contends that Europe is breaking away from the United States, thus speeding up NATO's collapse; that an economic war is raging between the United States and Japan; that China is becoming a great economic power and enhancing its nuclear power; that India is developing militarily and economically; and that Russia will not be in chaos forever and that its crises might prompt it to take a more hostile attitude toward the United States. He concludes that the American dream of power has been shattered.

He maintains that of all regions, the Arab region is the one surrounded by the Americans, who want to display their might and support the Zionist expansionist plan. He attributes this desire to God almighty's will ruling that "oil will be an Islamic product." Apart from Venezuela, all OPEC states are Muslim. Major non-OPEC reserves are in Somalia and the Muslim republics that belonged to the Soviet Union. And Chinese oil is concentrated in a region inhabited by Muslims, he explains. Admitting that oil is a vital strategic product and that whoever controls its output can control the world, he says that the Islamic states' monopoly of oil can turn them into a very influential political power. That is why major states try to avert this eventuality. The United States wants to monopolize Arab oil to control Europe and Japan's supply and thus subjugate these states as it pillages Arab wealth, Husayn claims. With oil, we can join the ranks of major states and mobilize billions of oppressed people for the Islamic awakening, he says.

Claiming the existence of a battle between Islam as a religion and civilization and the secularist, materialist West, Husayn says that Islam is "the right alternative, maintaining the balance between the materialist and the immaterialist and providing the solution for all mankind's suffering under Western control."

Reminding readers of the establishment of the Islamic state in Iran and Sudan, of Iraq's "steady development into a regime that is fully bound by Islamic shari'ah," and of events in Algeria, he says he sees a "belt of struggling Islamic states extending from the Arab Maghreb to Sudan and Somalia, then to Iraq and Iran, at the core of the Gulf and its oil." He notes that the "Islamic states' belt will not relinquish Palestine or Jerusalem once it expands."

Turning to Egypt, Husayn asserts that the people are fighting courageously under the Islamic banner. "Despite years of misleading campaigns, the youths have proven in their recent rallies and demonstrations that they firmly reject plans of capitulation to the U.S.-Zionist alliance," he says. He adds: "The coming stage will witness an escalation of rejection and resistance."

Addressing the ruling group, he states that the masses will not be deceived by the denunciation of the crime in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque. He assails the leadership, asking: What use is denunciation when it was you who led us to the current state? "We will not denounce with statements, but with organized action that removes you from your posts so that a new faithful, courageous, and clean government can rise and join the mujahidin in the Arab and Muslim nation," he says, adding: This will happen when we wrestle our right to hold free elections that will bring you down.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat: International Protection Before Talks

TA0803143094 Ankara Show Television in Turkish 2035 GMT 7 Mar 94

[Telephone interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Tunis by Mehmet Ali Birand—live; from the 32d program, in English with simultaneous translation into Turkish]

[Text] [Birand] Mr. Chairman, thank you for sparing your time tonight for us. We have seen very horrible pictures from the occupied territories. Now, does that mean that this is the end of the negotiations with Israel, the end of the peace process?

['Arafat] Firstly, with all efforts with the Arabs, with the Muslims, with the nonaligned movement, with the Europeans, we want to have a strong resolution in the Security Council. Eleven days have passed without being able to achieve this result. I ask: Why? Because there is U.S. opposition, and U.S. support now of the Israeli point of view, especially concerning Jerusalem and concerning the international protection, the mechanism of this international protection.

[Birand] Mr. Chairman, will you be going back to the negotiating table after this resolution?

['Arafat] I was informed by Mr. Christopher about the invitation which was offered to us by President Clinton. We are not against it, but first of all we have to protect our people. We have to give them tranquillity and security.

[Birand] Yes, so if I understand correctly, you need from the Israeli side protection.

['Arafat] From the international, not only from the Israeli side.

[Birand] And then you will start again negotiations, after you achieve this protection and after the UN Security Council passes a resolution? Is that correct?

['Arafat] Not only that. Are we going only to take pictures like the last time, or will we implement what has been agreed upon? Everyone is informed about the maneuvering of the Israelis. Till now they did not.... [pauses] They are trying to make time and not to implement what has been agreed upon and what has been signed in the White House.

[Birand] Palestinians are accusing you of naively believing the Zionists.

['Arafat] This is not a personal matter. Of course, we all have opposition, and we are proud of our democracy, and everybody has the right to express openly his point of view against our will. As [name indistinct] has mentioned, God bless he who criticizes me.

[Birand] Do you think that the peace process might again be revived, or do you think that it is over now?

['Arafat] You see, what is important now is that we are in need of international involvement, especially from the [word indistinct] Russia and the United States; from the European Union; and from our brothers, the Muslims; from our brothers, the Arabs; from our brothers, the Nonaligned Movement; from all our friends all over the world. We need their support, their strong and complete support so that our people can feel safe, secure, and the tranquillity of the peace process will be [word indistinct].

[Birand] Thank you very much.

Calls for 1,000 Military Observers

NC0803162394 Paris AFP in English 1553 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Cairo, March 8 (AFP)—PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat called Tuesday [8 March] for 1,000 armed military observers to be deployed in the occupied territories to protect the Palestinians in the wake of the Hebron massacre.

'Arafat told the Egyptian daily AL-JUMHURIYAH: "We don't want a force equipped with heavy arms and tanks. We are only asking for two battalions, about 1,000 men, carrying individual arms as part of a multinational force."

He added that Russia, France, Britain and Belgium had agreed to take part in such an international force.

Meanwhile the Palestine Liberation Organisation representative in Cairo, Sa'id Kamal, told AFP that the observers must be deployed "immediately" in Hebron before the stalled PLO-Israeli talks can resume.

The PLO has insisted that measures be taken to protect Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip and West Bank before it agrees to resume talks with Israel on implementing the September 13 accord on Palestinian self-rule.

The talks were suspended in the wake of the Hebron massacre when a Jewish settler slaughtered 29 Muslims at prayer.

Kamal said: "We are asking for an Israeli agreement in principle on international protection for Palestinians in the occupied territories which must start immediately with the deployment of observers in Hebron."

'Arafat told AL-JUMHURIYAH that if the PLO's demands on security guarantees were met, "the confidence of the Palestinian population could be restored."

'Arafat Refuses To Meet With Israeli Officials

NC0903093694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0855 GMT 9 Mar 94

[Text] Cairo, 9 Mar (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has emphasized that he refuses to meet with any Israeli official under the present circumstances and until the consequences of the massacre at the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron in the occupied West Bank are removed.

In a statement published in today's issue of the opposition weekly magazine AL-AHALI, 'Arafat said several attempts have been made to hold a meeting between him and Israeli officials, a lot of pressure has been applied, and international forces have interfered in arranging such a meeting, but he refuses until Israel takes specific and practical measures that show a real desire to safeguard the security of the Palestinian people, who are under occupation.

'Arafat stressed the PLO's adherence to a peaceful solution and its commitment to the agreements reached so far. He also referred to the continuing coordination and consultations with Egypt on the peace process in the Middle East.

'Arafat Meets With Yeltsin's Special Envoy

LD0903094294 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 2200 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Excerpt] Yesterday evening Brother Abu-'Ammar, president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, received Viktor Vasilyev, special envoy of Russian President Boris Yeltsin for the Middle East peace process.

During the meeting, which came as a continuation of Palestinian-Russian contacts, a discussion took place on the current developments in the situation in the region, in light of the massacre carried out by Zionist settlers in the holy Ibrahim mosque against the sons of the Palestinian people.

The Russian envoy informed President 'Arafat of the viewpoints of the Russian leadership on the latest developments. Brother President Abu-'Ammar told the Russian envoy of all the developments which have taken place at the UN Security Council concerning the importance of international protection, the Jerusalem issue, and the problem of settlements and armed settlers, particularly the extremists among them, inside the Palestinian cities. [passage omitted]

Sources: PLO Insists on UN Hebron Resolution

PM0803173594 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Mar 94 p 5

[Report by Muhammad 'Allam: "Washington Proposes, PLO Rules Out Imminent Meeting Between 'Arafat, Rabin"]

[Excerpts] Cairo—[Passage omitted] Palestinian sources have said that " 'Arafat will not meet with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres until the Security Council adopts a clear and decisive resolution" on the Hebron incident.

The sources said that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher offered Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to the Palestinian president, during the latter's visit to Washington the U.S. Administration's willingness to host a high-level meeting in Washington to discuss Palestinian demands, resume the negotiations, and impart impetus to the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement, because that "would be considered an achievement and a victory over the forces of extremism."

The Palestinian sources stressed "Palestinian eagerness to continue the negotiations and implement the agreement." However, they expressed the "PLO's insistence on the adoption of an international resolution, inasmuch as Security Council resolutions should not be ignored as an authority, nor should this disregard be perpetuated, as reflected in the U.S. offer." The sources stressed that the "PLO cannot ignore angry Palestinian reactions inside the the occupied territories."

The sources said that "a meeting between 'Arafat and Rabin in this atmosphere will not be successful." However, they pointed out that "the U.S. position is being studied, as is the possibility of holding such a meeting"—that is, if suitable conditions are available to ensure its success, "first and foremost the adoption of an international resolution." The sources went on: "It is the U.S. Administration which is in an embarrassing position, not the PLO, which enjoys collective international—with the exception of the United States and Israel— support for its demands." [passage omitted]

Asked whether the PLO would accept Israeli proposals that respond to PLO demands, provided an international resolution is not adopted, the Palestinian sources stressed to AL-HAYAH that "that is ruled out, because it would constitute a precedent." They also said: "The international organization's disregard for a massacre committed within the context of a conflict on which a considerable number of international resolutions have been adopted is a precedent with regard to the Security Council and represents the first real nail in the United Nation's coffin."

PLO Reportedly Orders Collection of Arms

JN0603114494 Amman AKHIR KHABAR in Arabic 5-6 Mar 94 p 1

["Exclusive" report]

[Text] Informed Palestinian sources have said the Tunis headquartered PLO leadership has issued stringent orders to its armed cadres in the occupied territories to collect their weapons and store them with reliable persons, and not to use them in any fashion whatsoever.

The instructions were issued after the PLO leadership received reports that some armed Fatah cadres were planning massive reprisals in retaliation against the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre.

Sources close to the Hamas Movement have said the Palestinian leadership hopes Hamas will not carry out any military operations at present, and that it will persist with the civil disobedience campaign, contending that military operations at present could undermine political gains.

The sources said Hamas halfheartedly responded to this request, but said it cannot restrain its cadres inside the occupied territories due to the monstrosity of the [Hebron] massacre.

PLO Cadres Call for Halting Peace Negotiations

NC0703162294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1545 GMT 7 Mar 94

[Text] Tunis, 7 Mar (MENA)-A group of PLO cadres in Tunisia has called for halting the negotiations with Israel at all levels and for suspending the promises and agreements until the Israeli settlers have been disarmed, the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza have been removed, and international protection has been provided for the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

The group—which includes 120 members of the PLO, the Fatah Movement's Revolutionary Council, and the Palestine National Council—has demanded the rejection of the suspicious calls to change the venue of the negotiations or to resume them before the settlements are removed.

This is said in a statement issued and signed by this group, a copy of which was sent to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat. Zuhdi al-Tarazi, the Palestinian president's adviser; Abu-Ja'far, director of the PLO's Political Department; and a number of Palestinian writers and journalists were among the signatories.

The statement denounces the massacre and says that the Israeli enemy, which is backed by world imperialism under U.S. leadership, will not be satisfied with anything less than the liquidation of the innocent owners of the land and the seizure of their lands and possessions.

The statement adds that Israel's involvement in reconciliation and negotiations is merely a maneuver to give them a better chance to minimize their losses and avoid blame.

Qaddumi on Ties With Jordan, Rabin's Stand

JN0803205694 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1540 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] [No dateline as received]—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, has said that the march of Palestinian-Jordanian cooperation and coordination in all areas is necessary in order to maintain joint interests and bolster cohesion between the two peoples on clear bases employing effective mechanisms and demonstrating a zealous and determined spirit.

In an interview with the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, Qaddumi stressed that the issue of cooperation between the Palestinian and Jordanian brothers can only be viewed as an indisputable fact that should not ignored. He said there was no serious coordination or cooperation for a period of time, but serious work began after the emergence of dangers resulting from new facts following the signing of the Declaration of Principles.

He said that joint interests strongly influence both parties and that our common fate is left to its destiny. He stressed that we should take quick and wide steps on the road of cooperation and coordination in order to face future challenges that will be reinforced by many upcoming political, economic, and social changes.

Answering a question on Israeli procrastination during the peace negotiations, Qaddumi said: Any observer of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's stands, since the signing of the Declaration of Principles, will notice that he is hesitant and stringent and is adopting decisions that he intends to implement by force.

Qaddumi added that, through his political policy, the Israeli prime minister aims at containing the West Bank and Gaza Strip in a a somewhat coercive manner. At the same time, the Israeli prime minister is announcing that the dates of withdrawal stipulated in the Declaration of Principles are not sacred.

Qaddumi noted that Rabin is justifying his failure to commit himself to these dates by what he calls the issue of security. He insists on keeping the military positions inside the areas from which the Israeli Army is supposed to withdraw.

He explained that the issue of security is subject to discussion because Israel is considered the country with the strongest military power in the Middle East. Israel has concluded agreements with Egypt and the Palestinians and is expected to conclude agreements with the rest of the Arab parties concerned with the peace process. Qaddumi said that Israel owns weapons of mass destruction, stressing that Israel's pretext of maintaining its security are void in the face of these facts that are known to the entire world.

Qaddumi said that Rabin insisted in the recent negotiations, which concluded with the Cairo agreement, on controlling the crossing points, and he is still prevaricating by not defining the Jericho area, which was 345 square km at the time of the British mandate. The Israelis, he noted, are holding negotiations over every inch of this area, although the agreement stipulates another withdrawal from all these areas after two months.

He went on to say that the Israeli prime minister instructed the negotiating delegation to be intransigent enough to depict Israel as if it is the owner of the right to this territory and that it is offering a piece of it as a grant to the Palestinians to live on. They forget UN Security Council 242, which is the basis for a political settlement.

Qaddumi said that the Israelis insist on maintaining a presence in the Palestinian territories through military and security posts or settlements. The Israelis also insist on taking part in the administration of security issues in the Gaza Strip and Jericho areas from which they will withdraw. They also insist on freedom of movement for the Israeli Army and settlers in these areas.

He noted that the Israelis are expanding Israeli settlements and are connecting them to wide streets patrolled by a joint force of Israeli soldiers and settlers. He said that everyday, the Israeli prime minister is placing more nails in the coffin of the Declaration of Principles. At the same time, he is announcing that his coercive policy will lead to a just and lasting peace.

Qaddumi noted that Rabin is setting conditions for withdrawal. These include reaching economic agreements and a customs unity, approving the shekel as an official unit of currency, getting familiar with members of the national authority and studying their files, as well as controlling who enters and leaves Gaza and Jericho.

Qaddumi said: How can Rabin ask this before the Palestinians start to run their own affairs? One of the basic conditions for signing contracts is that we have sovereignty over our land, complete sovereignty so that we can sign contracts on customs, financial, and other affairs as an equal to Israel.

Qaddumi said that the Israelis are trying, through their current policy, to convince the world that they will reach a just solution to the Palestinian cause while they impose more restrictions on our people and on our occupied Palestinian homeland. He said that the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, and the Arab-Israeli negotiations in general, will expose the Israeli stand and that the world at large will see through tangible evidence that Israel

rejects peace and is leading the region toward more tension, anxiety, and instability.

In reply to a question on international assistance to the Palestinians, Qaddumi said that several countries that participated in the economic conference in Washington on 1 October last year had set the sums they will allocate as economic assistance to the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Qaddumi added that the World Bank was charged with administering the these funds to finance economic projects the Palestinian territories need. He said that intensive contacts were held with all the concerned parties to start the implementation of these projects, and that, particularly, some European countries had asked us to deal with them on a bilateral level and through the EC.

Qaddumi explained that certain Islamic states have offered financial assistance to cover some current expenditures and that there is a need for more funds to cover expenses in security, education, health, and other fields. He said implementation will start as soon as possible on some projects for which contracts were signed with the donors.

Qaddumi referred to statements by Israeli officials that European and U.S. assistance will not reach the Palestinians unless agreement is reached on all outstanding issues. He stressed that the concerned quarters in the donor countries were asked to protest these statements, which are viewed as a form of blackmail.

Qaddumi said that some Islamic states have offered assistance, specifically for covering part of the current expenditures and to keep institutions in the occupied territories operational while other countries have earmarked their grants and loans for building projects, and maintaining and developing already established institutions.

Speaking about the criticism some Palestinian and Arab parties leveled at the Cairo agreement, Qaddumi said: Every Palestinian has the right to level constructive criticism at Palestinian officials. Such a right should be nurtured throughout the Arab homeland. The Cairo agreement and the Declaration of Principles are not sacred and one can criticize them, but in a constructive and not a destructive manner, in a manner that unites and does not divide, and in a manner that strengthens one's resolve to achieve national unity.

PLO 'Finance Minister' Favors Market Economy

BR0803162194 Paris LE MONDE (ECONOMIE supplement) in French 8 Mar 94 pp I,VI

[Report by Marc Roche on interview with PLO "Finance Minister" Jawid al-Ghusayn in London; date not given: "The Economy Will Follow, the PLO 'Finance Minister' Declared to Us"]

[Text] Jawid al-Ghusayn, PLO "finance minister" and president of the Palestinian National Fund, is certainly not a fanatical idealist. A very rich businessman, he lives in London and displays great moderation. The PLO's big financier, a liberal, explains that the market economy will be imposed in the occupied territories but he cautiously stressed that a climate of confidence is vital and that the settlement of the political problems is a precondition for any economic development.

"To attract investment and channel funds to lasting development projects, we want to establish a market economy in which the private sector and not the public sector will play the main role." In different times, Jawid al-Ghusayn could have held court in the room furnished with cushions where the sultan's council met under the Ottoman occupation, but he does not give the impression of being idle. There is no sign of Palestine in this luxury Mayfair apartment, in the fashionable district of London, with modernist decoration from which no detail is absent, not even the thirties' furniture and the abstract paintings.

The president of the Palestinian National Fund, with his sober suit and his club necktie, blends with the City financiers. And when this very rich businessman, a member of a famous family of citrus fruit farmers in the Gaza strip, mentions the 13 September 1993 agreement between Israel and the PLO, there is no trace of sentimentality in what he says: "To establish good cooperation, the psychological environment is crucial. When you choose an associate, this agreement is based on confidence, reciprocity, equality between the parties. How can you build the future if you distrust each other?" If, like any well-born Palestinian, our interlocutor feels he is partly British, it is by his phlegm, the almost infectious calmness, that he shows it: "Let us first solve the political problems and the economy will follow."

Businessman

Jawid al-Ghusayn? Who is he? We do not even know what the "Who's Who in the Arab World?" nonchalantly "forgotten" on the table, says of him. Why is it there? He is not in it. His history in business is like that of many Palestinian-born entrepreneurs, uprooted by the creation of the Israeli State in 1948 or the rush to the Persian Gulf oil paradise in the early fifties. After studying economics at the American University in Cairo (where he met Yasir 'Arafat), this man, who is completely bilingual in Arabic and English, made his fortune in the construction industry, first in Kuwait, then in Abu Dhabi, and in Qatar. After winning comfortable commissions as intermediaries between the oil monarchies and the Western companies, many Palestinian businessmen gained positions in the public buildings and works sector, import-export, tourism, and agribusiness, always cropping up where nobody dared to venture. There is no sign of photographs of 'Arafat, yellowed engravings of the Dome of the Rock, or ashtrays in PLO colors.

Jawid al-Ghusayn, 63 years old, is not playing at being a defender of the Palestinian cause, he simply is one, holding an essential place within Fatah. Our interlocutor, who has been "PLO finance minister" since 1984, is a legitimate member of the executive committee. His department provides for the needs of bodies like the Association of Martyrs' Families, the Liberation Army, diplomatic missions, the payment of the organization's cadres, or financial support for the Intifadah.

He is also one of the founder leaders of the Welfare, the most powerful of the Palestinian charity organizations which works on aid projects in the sphere of training, healthcare, the preservation of the heritage in the occupied territories. It is an association set up by the famous "London Club"—the informal set of rich businessmen of Palestinian origin based in the City.

Treasury

Grouping entrepreneurs like 'Abd-al-Majid Shuman, president of the Arab Bank Group, Muhsin Kittani and Munib al-Masri, princes of the public buildings and works sector, and many others, this "London club" represents considerable economic influence. Its members, who prefer to work behind the scenes, have a bridgehead in Britain—the former mandatory power—and ties of confidence with what is called the English establishment. The private fortune of Palestinians abroad is estimated to be $10 billion. "One of the great assets of the future entity," according to John Milne, Bank of England adviser for the Near East.

"The era of socialism and nationalizations is over. Everybody is now privatizing," we were told by the big PLO financier. The organization's war "treasury" is estimated at $5 billion. But the cessation of payments from the Arab countries, angered by the pro- Iraqi position taken by the PLO during the Gulf War, forced Jawid al-Ghusayn to reduce spending. Although he and Abu-al-'Ala', his colleague who is director of the PLO and Fatah Economic Committee, the man at the center of the secret talks with Israel, supervise this nest egg, Yasir 'Arafat is still the man who really has financial power. Jawid al-Ghusayn tried to be reassuring: " 'Arafat, an engineer by training, was an entrepreneur in Kuwait before taking the reins of the PLO. He knows what economic liberalism and the free movement of capital mean."

However, there is no question of discussing big bucks or corruption. This is what real treasurers are like. "We want to build an efficient but light government machine. The inhabitants of the territories will be responsible for the administration, not expatriate cadres living in Tunis. They must have priority when hiring starts because they know the problems..." The businessman may well belong to the generation educated in the fifties and sixties, the great era of pan-Arabism, the Ba'th movement, and Nasirism, but his sober control of the Palestinian movement has always constantly been exercised in the direction of moderation. As befits a gentleman.

Bal'awi Urges Removal of Israeli Settlements

JN0503103194 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 5 Mar 94 pp 1, 25

[Text] Hakam Bal'awi, Fatah Central Committee member, official in charge of security, and the PLO's representative in Tunis, has said peace cannot be achieved in the presence of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In an exclusive statement to AL-RA'Y, Bal'awi added that the savage massacre at the holy Ibrahimi Mosque reaffirmed that the settlements and peace are two parallel lines that do not converge. Settlements are the antithesis of the peace process because they represent an occupation force; a settlement is a military barracks and an offshoot of the army. Hence, withdrawal of the [Israeli] army, as a military occupation force, must be accompanied by the removal of settlements, he noted.

Bal'awi added that a settler is only an army reservist and that the perpetrator of the massacre was a clear example of a military settler. The massacre once again confirmed Israeli institutions have so far been raised on grudges and racism. The question posed is: Would this make it possible to achieve a just peace, and can work be done to prevent such a mentality?

The Palestinian official said credible efforts for genuine peace require immediate discussion of these settlements as an urgent issue, and that international protection should be provided for the sons of our Palestinian people. Bal'awi added that the Israeli establishment, which was raised on rancorous instructions and education, should not imagine that the Palestinian resistance cannot continue its defiance, confrontation, and all forms of struggle, until Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories is terminated.

'Abd-al-Shafi Urges PLO To Stand Firm on Demands

TA0803154194 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 8 Mar 94 p 2

[Text] Jerusalem—Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi has emphasized that the peace process has lost much of its credibility in the wake of the Hebron massacre. This situation has also impacted on the Palestinian leadership, which has lost a significant part of its credibility as a result of Israel's practices on the ground.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi noted that after the massacre, the Palestinian popular mood lost confidence in the current political process. It believes that the talks will be futile and harmful if they are resumed without Israel dropping its claims on Jerusalem and the settlements and halting all settlement activities, which seek to create new facts that dictate the outlines of the final stage before the beginning of the interim stage.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi stressed that the Palestinian leadership, which wants to be apprised of what the people in

the occupied territories are saying now, should insist on the terms it has set and not back down. If the leadership wishes to regain its credibility, it should make those terms preconditions for returning to the negotiating table.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi added: We are not demanding impossible conditions, because the issue of the Palestinian residents' security must be sacred to the decisionmakers. Therefore, we must adhere to our demands, epitomized by disarming the settlers; ensuring effective international protection for our people in the occupied territories; and evacuating the settlements from Arab towns and heavily populated areas, such as the settlement quarter in the heart of Hebron and similar places.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi pointed out that adherence to these conditions might lead to the derailment of the peace process but that should this happen, the issue must be referred back to the international community to be resolved by it.

Fatah Dissident on International Jerusalem Day

LD0603122594 Tehran IRNA in English 1148 GMT 6 Mar 94

[Text] Damascus, March 6, IRNA—Secretary General of the Revolutionary Fatah Movement, Abu-Musa [Colonel Sa'id Musa Muragha] said here that the international Qods [Jerusalem] day is the manifestation of the Muslim ummah's true power in confronting the Israeli hegemony.

Abu-Musa told IRNA in an interview that Palestinian combatants who always confront compromising plans, follow the path of Imam Khomeyni and will continue their struggle until the freedom of the Holy Qods. The role the Islamic revolution of Iran plays in countering the Zionist conspiracies has caused the world arrogance to adopt anti-Iran stands, he noted.

Muslim nations today, under the auspices of Imam Khomeyni's teachings, have realised that the U.S. and Israel are their major enemies, Abu-Musa remarked. He urged Islamic and national forces to resist against the U.S. and Israeli conspiracies and not let the Zionists rule the region.

Abu-Musa said the last Friday's massacre by the Zionist forces of Muslim worshippers in al-Khalil [Hebron] was the natural consequence of 'Arafat-Rabin agreement.

PFLP Urges 'Arafat, Executive Committee To Resign

JN0603132794 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 6 Mar 94 p 19

[By Riyad Mansur in Amman]

[Excerpts] The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] has expressed great appreciation for Jordan's official stand toward the Hebron massacre. It said this stand reflects the profound link and common destiny between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples. The PFLP also appreciated Jordan's decision, along with Syria and Lebanon, to halt the negotiations in protest against the massacre of the age.

The PFLP held the PLO leadership and Executive Committee, led by Yasir 'Arafat, responsible for the current status of the Palestinian revolution and the PLO itself. It called upon 'Arafat and the Executive Committee to resign because they are unable to assume their national and political responsibilities.

PFLP Political Bureau member 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, who has frozen his membership in the Executive Committee in protest against the Madrid negotiations, has called for forming an interim PLO and Palestinian revolution leadership from inside and outside the territories. This leadership should be capable of ending the deterioration in the PLO's status and the Palestinian situation in general.

Speaking to SAWT AL-SHA'B, Malluh said the new leadership should be qualified and capable of assuming its national and political responsibilities and worthy of being entrusted with the rights and national cause of the Palestinian people, primarily their right to repatriation, self-determination, and independent statehood. [passage omitted]

Malluh strongly rejected the attempts of Rabin and his government to confine international protection of our people to Gaza and Jericho and to be supervised by civil observers. He said: We want full international protection by deploying a sufficient number of troops that can prevent a repetition of the daily massacres committed by the occupation authorities.

Malluh welcomed the return of Fatah's hawks and panthers to armed struggle against the occupation authorities and settlers. [passage omitted]

Malluh condemned U.S. policy that is biased toward Israel, calling for exposing it because it paves the way for further massacres against our people and sheds light on the true U.S. position toward our people's national rights. He urged those who have illusions about—or wager on—the U.S. position to drop their illusions and wagers. [passage omitted]

Bids To Return PFLP, DFLP to PLO Blocked

JN0903103894 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 9 Mar 94 p 15

[Report by Riyad Mansur]

[Text] Amman—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's attempts to return the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] to the PLO Executive Committee have been deadlocked.

The PLO leadership's attempts to return those who left the committee in protest against the Palestinian-Israeli agreement were made by Sulayman al-Najjab, Palestinian People's Party representative at the Executive Committee, 10 days after the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre. They coincided the efforts being exerted in Israel, Washington, Tunis, and Cairo to rescue the peace process.

The PFLP and DFLP expressed a desire to return to the PLO Executive Committee on condition that the Oslo and Cairo agreements are canceled and the negotiations are conducted according to international legitimacy's resolutions.

'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, PFLP Political Bureau member, who represented the front in the Executive Committee before resigning in protest against the peace talks, paid tribute to al-Najjab's efforts to return the resigning committee members and appreciated his care for Palestinian institutions and his objection to the Cairo agreement.

Malluh told SAWT AL-SHA'B that he emphasized to al-Najjab that he refuses to distinguish between the Oslo and Cairo agreements because the latter was an honest translation of the former. He said his front does not understand the current attempts to distinguish between the two as if they were different things. He said his return to the PLO Executive Committee is conditional on a commitment by the negotiators to reconsider all past policies, particularly the cancellation of the Oslo and Cairo agreements, and the presentation of guarantees to do so.

He pointed out that meetings [not further identified] sought to discuss the best ways by which the Executive Committee members, in their capacity as legitimate representatives elected by the Palestine National Council, can confront the state of deterioration being experienced by PLO institutions and the dangers surrounding the Palestine question and the PLO, considering the organization the Palestinian people's political entity and unified framework.

Malluh admitted that nothing has thus far emerged from these meetings despite the sense of national and political responsibility demonstrated by the Executive Committee members toward the serious situation of the Palestine question and toward re-adherence to the PLO's program, the program of return and self-determination.

Regarding the possibility of re-forming the Executive Committee, he said: We have to note the stands of the Committee members. These stands are mixed; some members accept the Oslo agreement and reject the Cairo agreement.

Asked if he would withdraw his resignation from the PLO Executive Committee to secure a majority that could bring about a coup, he said that, based on the members' position on the overall political process, it is still premature to expect a white coup in the Executive Committee. He added: A white coup needs to be studied. The issue is not one of a coup in the full sense of the word; it is the issue of safeguarding the Palestinian people's national interests and protecting the PLO from the concessions made by the negotiating team.

Alliance Forces Commemorate Hebron Massacre

JN0403201394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 4 Mar 94

[Excerpt] Damascus— The Alliance of Palestinian Forces [APF] held a rally at the al-Nujum cinema in al-Yarmuk refugee camp to commemorate the martyrs of the massacre of the blessed Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron one week after they were martyred.

The rally was attended by 'Abu-'Ali Mustafa, assistant secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP]; 'Umar al-Shihabi, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command Political Bureau member; and representatives from the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, the Palestinian Revolutionary Communist Party, the Islamic Jihad Movement, Hamas, the PFLP, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, al-Sa'iqah, and Fatah-the Uprising.

The rally was also attended by representatives of the Arab liberation movements in Syria, Palestinian nationalist figures, and a large crowd.

Abu-'Ali Mustafa delivered a speech on behalf of the APF at the rally in which he condemned the unforgivable reprehensible crime and stressed that the Palestinian people will pursue the struggle until victory. He said that the crime which spread from the blessed Ibrahimi Mosque to the Galilee, the Negev, Gaza, and Nazareth did not come as a surprise to our people. The evil Zionist enemy commits dozens of crimes against our Palestinian people daily. He added: Some say that the crime has come as a result of the rashness of a person in Hebron. We say that this crime is not the first and will not be the last in the Zionists history that is replete with crimes and that Israel is responsible for it.

Abu-'Ali Mustafa added: If the Israeli enemy says that it was a psychopath who killed the defenseless people in the Ibrahimi Mosque, then who are the psychopaths who daily attack the people of Palestine in Janin, Nabulus, Gaza, and Jerusalem? Is he the psychopath who attacked al-Aqsa mosque and southern Lebanon? He said that our people will fight until they attain victory. Our people will fight with faith and patience in spite of all the hardships, and Palestine will remain Arab in spite of them, and we will fight with all that we have, and the intifadah continues and rages in all places. We pledge to our martyrs that we will continue to fight until we score victory. [passage omitted]

Sources Deny Collecting Signatures Against Talks

JN0703110494 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 7 Mar 94 pp 32, 23

[By Tawfiq 'Abid]

[Excerpt] Palestinian sources in Amman have denied having any knowledge about attempts in the occupied Palestinian territories to collect a million Palestinian signatures for a petition asking President Yasir 'Arafat to withdraw from the negotiations with Israel and to resume the armed struggle to liberate the occupied territories.

The sources told AL-DUSTUR that Fatah and the Palestinian Democratic Party have adopted a common stand that is being enhanced and which affirms that the resumption of the negotiations requires suspending settlement activities, finding the appropriate monitoring means, divesting the settlers of their weapons, expediting the discussion of the issue of settlements, and dismantling settlements that are direct hotbeds of tension. [passage omitted]

Al-Najab Says Cairo Agreement Means 'New Prison'

AU0803101094 Vienna DER STANDARD in German 8 Mar 94 p 3

[Report by Artur K. Vogel in Tunis: "'Arafat Increasingly Under Pressure From PLO Grass Roots"]

[Text] When PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat convened a meeting of the PLO Executive Committee after the massacre in Hebron, only eight of 18 members came to Tunis. From Amman Sulayman al-Najab, secretary general of the formerly communist "Palestinian People's Party," let it be known that the Executive Committee had "not achieved a quorum" and was incapable of coming to a decision.

Previously, al-Najab had been one of the advocates of the Oslo agreement, even though he was not one of the closest friends of 'Arafat's, whose leadership style he increasingly disapproved of. He finally distanced himself from 'Arafat when the PLO chairman initialed an interim agreement with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in Cairo on 10 February. The formula, which 'Arafat agreed to at that time—special protection of Jewish settlers in the occupied territories, in return for Israeli-Palestinian control of the border-checkpoints between Jericho and Jordan as well as Gaza and Egypt—"means a new prison for Palestinians," al-Najab told DER STANDARD.

However, 'Arafat has not just lost followers. Some of his former critics have jointed him in these difficult days. One of them is "Foreign Minister" Faruq Qaddumi. In December he had listed the weaknesses of the Oslo agreement. Now he fully supports his chief.

Marwan Kanathani, 'Arafat's press spokesman, says that there is a certain temptation for his boss to stop the negotiations: "If 'Arafat were to say that this entire damned process is over, he would become absolutely the most popular person among the Arabs again." And "if 'Arafat were to feel that he is losing control over the PLO leadership and the Palestinian people, he will do everything to remain in power. This includes a freezing of the peace process."

Officials of Citizen's Rights Society Named

TA0303193594 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 3 Mar 94 p 2

[By Da'ud Kuttab]

[Text] Jerusalem—Al-QUDS has learned that in recent days the charter of the independent Palestinian citizen's rights society was approved and that Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi was chosen as its secretary general.

Sources have affirmed to AL-QUDS that the society's internal elections were held when most of its officials, some of whom had come from abroad, were present here. In addition to 'Ashrawi, Dr. Mamduh al-'Akir was chosen as deputy secretary general, Dr. As'ad 'Abd-al-Rahman as secretary, Lamis al-'Alami as treasurer, and Iyad Sarraj as deputy secretary.

The society comprises 15 officials, including Professor Edward Said, poet Mahmud Darwish, judge Eugene Qatran, Dr. Nasir 'Aruri, Professor Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, Hanan Riyan al-Bakri, Fatih 'Azzam, and Anis Fawzi Qasim.

The society is expected to release details of its aims and charter within the coming days.

Commentary Urges U.S. Pressure on Israel

JN0503213894 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 5 Mar 94

[Text] The massacre in the holy Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, committed by a group of Zionist settlers against worshipers and the subsequent escalation of undeterred suppression and killing of Palestinian citizens by the Israeli settlers and forces, emphasized the futility of Israeli authorities' allegations about the possibility of adopting measures that restrain—and we do not say stop—the settlers' recklessness.

The full right given to the settlers by the Israeli authorities to possess weapons and open fire at Palestinian civilians whenever they are able to do so makes these authorities officially responsible for all crimes and organized killing of Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories.

The international consensus to denounce the crime and condemn its perpetrators and the influential officials within the Israeli leadership who stand behind them showed—though with different degrees, that securing

international protection for the Palestinian people under occupation has become a pressing subject which needs urgent and immediate measures to deter the unrestrained Zionist violence. The Zionist violence is threatening—now more than ever—to torpedo the peace process. Peace cannot be realized in the absence of a reasonable degree of security and peace. The Palestinian people, who have been and are still the victims of Zionist massacres and the continuation of the Zionist occupation of their homeland, have the right to live in peace and to enjoy all their human and national rights away from terrorism and the weapons and repressive practices of the Israeli occupation.

The legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, as called for by the international norms and charters on human rights in times of war, require relentless efforts by all international forces concerned with peace to realize these rights. They should not be satisfied with acquainting themselves with observers reports that reject Israeli violations of these rights. The world was already acquainted with many of these violations, which are increasing daily as as a result of the absence of any international deterrence and because international legitimacy does not carry out its duties, does not shoulder its responsibilities, and does not apply a single yardstick toward the peoples' causes.

It a time for action because the explosive situation in occupied Palestine requires a serious position from the international community and the United States, in particular—a position which contributes to dissipating the imminent Zionist danger that exposes the whole peace process to deterioration and setback.

The United States has announced more than once its eagerness to render the peace process successful—the process for which the United States is the main sponsor. The United States has repeated this positions scores of times. So can the United States prove the credibility of its ideas by forcing the Israeli Government to accept practical measures that secure international protection for the Palestinian people? The United States should be aware that the Hebron massacre has not only exposed the falsity of Israel's eagerness to realize peace, but has also revealed the dangerousness of the continuation of this situation—we mean the continuation of occupation and the continuation of settlements and settlers. This question does not go along with the peace process, peace spirit, and the efforts to establish peace.

It is time for the United States to be aware that this stage requires adding deeds to words, keeping away from ambiguity, and resorting to clarity of positions—as they are and as they should be—active positions against crimes, terrorism, and occupation that deter the killers, provide protection for the Palestinian people, and keep the road to peace open until its noble objectives are realized.

Damascus 'Forces of Rejection' Criticized

JN0503203594 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 5 Mar 94

[Text] Brothers: Amid the upheaval that resulted from shedding Palestinian blood in the Ibrahimi Mosque, we find space for tranquility, room for thinking, planning, and action with the least losses in terms of our sincere feelings that are coupled with righteous indignation, and without any (?unchecked) emotion.

As Palestinians, aware of our pains and the paths of our hopes, we, who are continuing to bleed, hope to transform the Hebron horror into action, provided we do so in calmness and with the firm heart of the warrior engulfed by burning fire, exactly as we ourselves are engulfed.

We are aware that the Hebron massacre is one of the bricks with which Israel was built; a foundation made of massacres such as Dayr Yasin, Kafr Qasim, the holy al-Aqsa Mosque, and others. As Palestinians, we are aware of the monster residing in the Israeli mind. Therefore, we must—more than anyone else—make the Hebron Massacre the last massacre. We must hold a sharp sword to cut off the head of this Israeli monster. This can be realized by adhering to two interconnected conditions: the first is national unity; and second, unity of aims. Let us now ask what we exactly want in terms of dues from the Israeli enemy and the international legitimacy following the Hebron massacre.

For its part, the PLO, and in a proper international climate, presented its terms and said: Negotiations are suspended until an international response to our just demand for protecting our people is forthcoming and until Israel submits to our people's right to live securely without any harm and without the evils of the Israeli occupation. This can be realized by placing the fate of the settlements at the head of the agenda of negotiations.

Therefore, the PLO's aim is clear and aboveboard. It is an aim that is commensurate with the peace option and at the same time does not deviate from the slogans of the Palestinian national struggle but rather gives it a realistic and practical push forward as reflected by this all-out international support.

Now what do the forces of rejection in Damascus want? What do they want after the Hebron massacre? In short what is their aim? They are vowing three times [reference to Muslim decision to divorce a wife] to divorce the peace option. They adhere to the slogans of the Palestinian national struggle. They are solidifying like fossils inside these slogans, which reflects the current collapse and disintegration. In short, while they cannot stand the peace option, they have no alternative. They have been like this since they spread themselves out and assumed the garb of the opposition. Does this mean that there is a crack in the Palestinian national unity, that is, conflicting aims and disintegration?

If we stick to the idea of room for tranquility, which we established at the beginning of this talk, we find that no one Palestinian will be able to outrun his Palestinian brother in his righteous indignation against the Hebron massacre. The feelings are the same although they take various forms. However, what is more important is the Palestinian stand on the causes and not only the results of the Hebron massacre. The Palestinian people have never abandoned their unity under the PLO banner in their rejection of Israel's unlawful existence and settlements on the land of the Palestinian state, an existence which is the primary cause of the Hebron massacre.

In principle, we are united under the PLO banner in rejecting the Israeli settlers' existence. This was our stand before the Hebron massacre and will remain our stand until the removal of the settlements which constitute the big obstacle on the path of negotiations and peace. They are the time bombs which threaten to explode in a very dangerous manner.

Palestinian national unity and the unity of aims cannot be undermined as the Israeli enemy hopes. In the blood, amid the fire, and in the heart of the storm and its dust, our unified and united people clearly see and are fully aware of how to deal with big events. The Hebron massacre, grave as it is, and with the challenges that it imposes on us, gives us more than just a vista of hope. This is the characteristic of the martyrs blood. This blood gives light. It does not extinguish our fire and does not disintegrate. Let the short-sighted ones understand and desist.

Algeria

'Most Violent Fundamentalist' New GIA Chief

BR0903113794 Paris LE FIGARO in French 9 Mar 94 p 4

[Unattributed report: "New GIA Chief"]

[Text] Sayah Attia has become the new chief of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), replacing Mourad Si-Ahmed, who was killed by Algerian security forces in Algiers in February. Sayah Attia, who already was at the helm of several active GIA cells, is described in the local press as "the most violent fundamentalist terrorist." On Monday and Tuesday alone, three Algerian citizens were killed in Islamic attacks.

New Presidency Appointments; Further Amnesty Possible

PM0803114394 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Mar 94 p 4

[Excerpt] ALgiers, AL-HAYAH—AL-HAYAH has learned that new administrative appointments were made the day before yesterday in the presidency. Djaballah Belkacem (former member of the local supreme information council) has been appointed as director of information in the presidency, succeeding Mohamed Zehani, who has been appointed as the former's deputy for public relations. Mr. Ben Abbo, former presidential adviser, has been appointed as director general of the department.

Well-informed Algerian sources have said that further appointments will be made in the next few days at the presidency, government, and the economic-social council level.

Presidency circles have begun to consider a number of measures to ease the severity of the tension the country has been experiencing for a week. The sources pointed to the possibility a general amnesty being issued for a new group of detainees in the coming few days and the curfew imposed on central provinces lifted on the occasion of the blessed 'Id al-Fitr. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Mubarak Urges Reform in Koran Anniversary Speech

NC0903085594 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1929 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Speech by President Husni Mubarak at al-Azhar University in Cairo on 8 March—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The grand imam of al-Azhar, venerable ulemas, brothers and sisters, dear sons: Feelings of veneration and devotion engulf all of us at this meeting on this blessed night, as we derive the noble morals and deep lessons on the occasion marking the night when the skies inspired the Prophet, God's peace and blessings be upon him. Yes, this is the occasion when the holy inspiration manifested itself to the Prophet on the night the Koran was revealed—a night holier than 1,000 months. Our celebration of this occasion, which in our hearts and minds is associated with the greatest divine verses, is worthy of inspiring us with the best lessons and greatest preachings. How true God's words are in His holy book: "But teach thy message for teaching benefits the believers." [Koranic verse]

We have the most noble potentials, with which we mobilize ourselves, and the best lessons, with which we train our minds, while reliving this glorious commemoration; it is for us to see these things as the Creator wanted us to see them through his holy Koran—as guidance and mercy for all people. We should turn it into an appropriate annual occasion, at which we pause to review the state of the nation. We hold ourselves accountable before others. We read our files and record of achievements before they are read to us out of our desire to rectify our steps, correct our trends, and work on overcoming the obstacles before us. This should take place on the basis of the noble Islamic values and correct Islamic morality that we acquire from the wise teachings God sent us in the form of a book which, without the shadow of a doubt, is guidance for the devout and a blessed message from the skies to the earth to light the path of progress and prosperity for all mankind.

The Koran is the lighthouse leading to the haven of security and the shore of salvation for those who are oppressed and tossed around by the storms of disaster. This has been confirmed by historic developments throughout the ages when the Muslims were guided by its tolerant values and noble principles. They progressed, developed, and advanced as advocates of justice and goodwill until the light of Islam and its teachings dawned on the most important parts of the world.

The Koran brought the Arabs out of darkness and ignorance into the realm of knowledge and civilization. It turned them from divided tribes and unrighteous paganism into a united and monotheist nation. It uplifted them from conflicts and divisions to the realms of accord, harmony, compassion, and peace. Islam then spread East and West and its minarets and banners rose everywhere. This clear victory was achieved thanks to the Koran's immortal humanitarian and civilized values, which Islam added to man's civilization. The most significant of these values are those of freedom, tolerance, equality, justice, fraternity, cooperation, love, and peace. Islam acknowledges the value of useful knowledge and appreciates didactic literature and sublime art. It exalts the value of serious effort and considers straightforward ethics as a basic part of religion and even the main goal of religiosity.

A look at the affairs of the Muslim people today fills us with pain, despite the successes achieved by our Muslim

people in many areas and the accomplishments attained due to the efforts of faithful leaders, the sacrifices of our martyrs, and the endeavors of good citizens. A look at the affairs of our people and reflection on our conditions would bring sorrow to our souls, agony to our hearts, and would puzzle our intellect. What pains us in our people's situation today are those negative phenomena that are completely alien to our nature and at odds with the tenets of our God-given faith. Among these phenomena are:

First, ravaging conflicts;

Second, disabling backwardness;

Third, disrupting discord, destructive terrorism, fanatic extremism, rampant deviation, and misguided doctrines.

Brothers and sisters, regrettably, we can see divisive conflicts in more than one place in the Islamic world. These conflicts take many and varied forms, ranging from tribal power struggles and ideological power struggles to ethnic power struggles aimed at domination. They sometimes take the form of material conflicts to satisfy ambitions. I don't want to specify these areas of conflict or name the leaders or rival factions or say anything that might be considered interference in others' affairs. But I would like to say with clarity and conviction that these conflicts have nothing to do with our religion. No way do they serve the interests of our nation. The impact of these conflicts is evidently destructive, disunites our nation, undermines our force, and offends the image of Islam. They cause the death of many innocent people, bloodshed, waste our wealth, and destroy our establishments. The consequences of these conflicts will weaken and exhaust our nation and drown it in misery and wretchedness and threaten it, God forbid, with annihilation.

Strange that this struggle is taking place in several places in the Islamic world and is affecting and threatening us, despite the Koran's appeal for solidarity, call for collaboration, and prohibition of conflict and struggle. How great are the almighty's words: "And hold fast, all together, by the rope which God stretches out for you, and be not divided among yourselves." And his words: "And fall into no disputes, lest ye lose heart and your power depart."

The disabling backwardness has many forms in the life of our nation and different forms among the people. There is scientific backwardness, which has made the nation's illiteracy rate among the highest in the world. There is cultural backwardness, which has led to a lack of awareness among many people regarding the facts and changes of the age and has led to an unwarranted conflict between adherence to origins and keeping abreast of modern developments or between adherence to the teachings of religion and expressing views on temporal affairs or even unjustly claiming that thought, modernization, and development are contrary to religion.

There is also material backwardness, which has made many members of our nation importers, not producers or innovators, and deprived them of having their own means and applications appropriate for their conditions, the nature of their resources, and their manpower requirements. Puzzling is that all this appears in numerous places in our nation, although the Koran has urged the faithful to manage their own affairs and manage the creatures of the earth, and seek progress and the means for material, moral, and spiritual strength. The Koran also orders them to strive and work in every field of life, in building, in developing the universe, and in seeking education and knowledge. We must strive for scientific progress according to the almighty God's words: "Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know?" The almighty's words are: "Those truly fear God among his servants who have knowledge."

The Koran is full of testimonial verses calling for advancing thought and elevating sentiments and advocating innovation and the subjugation of nature to the use of mankind. How numerous are the Koranic verses that advocate the need to use our brains, correct the view, develop the mind, elevate the sentiments by walking through the land, following the news of nations, taking lessons from history, and contemplating the beauties of existence, the magnificence of creation, and the wonders of the universe.

We should remember that the first words revealed by God on that blessed night and the first words with which the heavens addressed the earth in those immortal moments were those sacred verses that open the eyes to the magnificence of the creation and call for knowledge and education. They, at the same time, glorify the most important tool for recording sciences, encyclopedias, and cultures. These sacred verses are the almighty's words: "Proclaim (or read) in the name of thy lord and cherisher, who created—created man out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood. Proclaim! And thy lord is most bountiful, he who taught (the use of) the pen—taught man that which he knew not."

Islam has fought backwardness in all its forms and persisted in urging the Muslims to take their place at the front. But we see among the negative phenomena in our nation today this disabling backwardness that halts the movement of the nation and stands between it and the glory and advancement it deserves.

As for the destructive terror, it is wreaking havoc in more than one area on the Islamic scene. Its conduct is wicked, criminal, aggressive, and shows disregard for human life. Its objectives are criminal. Its plans are bloody. Despite that, it masquerades in religious attire, hides behind a false claim of reform, and adopts deceptively attractive slogans. At the best of times, these slogans are words of truth but their objective is evil and misleading. But terrorism twists and deflects these slogans and takes them out of context to serve its criminal objectives and support its bloody plans. This is hypocrisy and those who

practice it are the hypocrites whom God has condemned to eternal fire because they rephrase God's words and do what they do not state.

What does religion have to do with the killing of innocent people? Where do reform and piety stand with respect to spreading panic and bloodshed? Where is the justice in shaking stability, fighting a war against people's livelihood, and hampering progress and prosperity? Where is the honesty and piety in behavior that contradicts all the teachings dictated by the pure Koranic texts and the noble prophetic traditions such as the sanctity of human life and preserving the rights of mankind to freedom?

Where are the texts that sanction human bloodshed because they object to an individual's opinion or reject his ideas? Did not the almighty God say in precise verses: "Invite all to the way of thy lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious. For thy lord knoweth best who have strayed from his path and who receive guidance." Where are the texts that sanction the bloodshed of innocent people, including those people who have nothing to do with a specific opinion or way of thinking?

Dear brothers and sisters, the holy Koran, which the hypocrites and terrorists use as their slogan and that has nothing to do with them, has stipulated: "If any one slew a person—unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land—it would be as if he slew the whole people." [Koranic verse]

The terrorists claim the prophet of great Islam is their guide, while he rejects them and disassociates himself from them and has decreed that the sanctity of a Muslim's blood is greater to God than the sanctity of the Kaaba. He banned an individual from terrorizing his brother, even by merely directing a weapon at him or something that looks like a weapon and that frightens him. Terrorists and hypocrites add to their crimes of terrorizing, killing, and attacking innocent people one more crime: They explain religion for the sake of their vile objectives and exploit its texts for their destructive practices. They are lying to God and his prophet. They are oppressing God's people. "And soon will the unjust assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take." [Koranic verse] [applause]

As for extremism, ladies and gentlemen, we see mental extremism and arrested behavior in many stances diverting some people away from moderation, which is the course of our religion and the call of our Koran. This extremism and stagnation cause negative behavior among those who adopt such a course, thus pushing them to fight others and misjudge moderates. It leads them to seclusion and isolation to the extent of secession. This also leads them to making enemies with society at times and to desecrating and attacking it at other times.

Thus, hate driven by extremism becomes terrorism when it turns from a negative political stance into criminal and aggressive behavior. Extremism deflects Islamic behavior from the correct course because it obstructs social harmony, mental peace, and moderation. It leads to isolation and alienation and pushes individuals to resort to terrorism and to join bloody criminals and outlaws who have reneged on society and who attack peaceful citizens. These reneging extremists have distorted the image of Muslims. Many non-Muslims now judge Islam unfairly through the behavior of these extremists who belong to the nation of Islam.

It is painful that this happens while virtues are at the core of Islam. The most important aim of worship in Islam is to teach Muslims moral values and good behavior. The Koranic verses and the prophet's sayings are replete with calls for adherence to sublime moral values and virtuous behavior.

Brothers and sisters, these negative factors to which I have referred have obstructed the march of our nation, weakened it, and distorted its image. They have encouraged others to prey on this nation and have doubled the number of its enemies. As a result, some blatant forces have belittled some of the sons of our nation, cruelly torturing them, killing them brutally, and attacking their sanctities with barbarism. Because of these negative factors that have distorted the nation's image and increased the enemies of its religion some people have called for fighting this nation and eliminating it. Our nation cannot restore its prestige, retake its position, or catch up with the new world unless it gets rid of everything that obstructs its march, weakens it strength, and distorts its image.

The new world is the world of the strong who are respected by everyone, whose words are heard, and whose rights are safeguarded. The new world is the world of detente and unity, not of division and conflict. The new world, brothers and sisters, is the world of progress and development, not the world of backwardness and stagnation. The new world is that of integration and interaction, the exchange of interests, and cooperation for a better future, not of contradictions and contrasts and the depletion of wealth and resources. The new world is supposed to be the world of security, stability, and peace, not of disturbances, threats, intimidation, and bloodshed. The new world must be a world of openness, tolerance, and brotherhood, not a world torn asunder by fanaticism and extremism. The new world must be one of human values and good behavior, not of lawlessness, deviation, chaos, and barbarism. All these values preached by the new world have been preached by Islam and Prophet Muhammad since the holy inspiration descended on him on Laylat al-Qadr [night of the revelation of the Koran] and throughout his mission, which he performed perfectly until he died and joined his God.

If we want to correct our march and eschew our negative aspects, we have the verses of the holy Koran and the teachings of our great prophet to guide us so that we may forge ahead on the path of progress instead of remaining

backward and stagnant. We can strive to achieve integration and cooperation instead of continuing with our contradictions and slackness. We must also promote a spirit of moderation in line with Islam's course and tolerance. We must first make morality and ethics the basis of our life, the framework of our activities, and the light of our behavior so that our way of life will be set right and so that our image will be corrected in others' eyes. We will thus be worthy of the Koranic verse: "Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind." [Koranic verse]

Grand Imam and Rector of al-Azhar Mosque, O venerable ulema, brothers and sisters, you may agree with me that the best celebration of this blessed night lies in learning a useful lesson in its rich significance for our situation and our path. You may agree with me that our need for this lesson and significance is more pressing now than ever. Our nation, regrettably, is suffering from numerous negative aspects. Part of our nation is suffering from painful types of aggression and violation. These negative aspects and violations recently took a form that agonizes the hearts of the zealots and sincere people. Remedying these negative aspects and warding off violations lies, as I have often said, in following the values of the holy Koran and the example of our great prophet, may God's peace and prayers be upon him.

On this blessed night and from the grounds of the al-Azhar Mosque, I appeal to my brothers, sons of the Islamic nation everywhere, each to play a role in reviving his nation as much as he can. I appeal to everyone to face up to his duty and responsibility. We are all shepherds and every shepherd is responsible for his community. The basis of reviving the nation lies in adherence to its holy Koran, the principles of its prophet, and the teachings of its religion. Foremost among these values, principles, and teachings are cohesion and adherence to God's path in a way that rejects divisive conflicts and that rises and achieves progress and rejects disabling backwardness. They should seek integration and cooperation so as to end the divisive contradictions. They should seek to establish security and consolidate stability and finish off destructive terrorism. They should spread a spirit of moderation and tolerance to prevent rigid extremism. And last but not least, they should strengthen straightforward ethics and honest behavior to prevent rampant deviation. Brothers and sisters, let us begin today, not tomorrow, to perform our duty in adhering to these immortal humanitarian Islamic values that will ensure our salvation. Let us work with the utmost determination to eschew our negative aspects and achieve our renaissance. This is a selfless call that I address for the sake of God and the interest of my nation. I hope my brothers will heed this call. All I want is to create reform. God grants success. May God's peace and blessings be upon you. [applause]

PLO's 'Abbas Arrives, To Discuss Resuming Talks

Musa, 'Abbas To Discuss Contacts

NC0803204094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2000 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu-Mazin, arrived in Cairo this evening on a two-day visit to Egypt.

Arriving, he said he will meet later tonight with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to discuss the latest Palestinian-Israeli contacts and the UN Security Council debate and to search for a suitable solution to resume talks with the Israelis to implement the Gaza-Jericho Agreement.

Abu-Mazin said the Palestinian leadership is always eager for contacts and consultations with Egypt as a full partner to the negotiations.

Palestinian Issue Reviewed

NC0803220994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2150 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa tonight met PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, who arrived in Cairo earlier today.

The meeting, which was attended by Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal and Fatah representative Zuhdi al-Qidrah, reviewed developments in the Palestinian issue.

The talks followed Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat's discussions in Cairo. They evaluated the peace process in light of the recent developments and the impact of the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre on the peace march.

'Abbas Comments on Discussions

NC0903065494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2230 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee Member Mahmud 'Abbas has said that he discussed with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa the crisis that the Palestinian-Israeli peace process is now experiencing as a result of the Hebron massacre.

He said after his meeting with the foreign minister today that they also discussed the Palestinian demands to resolve the crisis, both a UN Security Council resolution and measures that the Israeli Government needs to take to prevent the recurrence of the massacre.

He said the two sides also discussed cooperation between Egypt and the PLO to achieve the best results.

On the possibility of a summit meeting between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, 'Abbas said such a meeting is out of the question before certain measures have been taken: the

issuance of a Security Council resolution and adoption of specific Israeli positions to handle the crisis resulting from the massacre.

On the Palestinian proposals presented to Rabin, 'Abbas said the PLO has not yet received an Israeli reply.

He said the PLO presented specific and known proposals that can be summed up by the following questions: How can the Palestinian people be protected and how can another Hebron massacre be prevented? We have not yet received a reply from the Israeli Government, he said.

What is needed, 'Abbas asserted, is UN-recognized international observers to protect the Palestinians.

AL-SHA'B: Israeli Army Chiefs Planned Hebron Killings

NC0803174394 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 4 Mar 94 pp 3, 7

[Report by Mahmud Bakri]

[Text] AL-SHA'B has obtained information proving the involvement of the Israeli army chiefs in the criminal massacre of the Palestinians in the honorable al-Ibrahimi Mosque last Friday. The massacre led to the martyrdom of 90 Palestinians and the wounding of some 500.

The information confirms that the massacre was arranged in the wake of the recent agreement signed in Cairo between Yasir 'Arafat and terrorist Shim'on Peres, the foreign minister of the Zionist enemy. According to this information, Israeli Chief of Staff Ehuda Barak received the plan for attacking the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in the first week of February. In light of that plan, he gave orders to change the security guards in the city of Hebron one week before the massacre. The change involved 20 security chiefs, who were informed of the details of the settlers' scheme to commit the massacre.

Our information is that the Israeli security chiefs ordered the Israeli soldiers to intervene should the plan fail or in case the Palestinians resisted the settlers who had been selected to carry out the plan. The name "Operation Theresa" was given to the operation to storm the al-Ibrahimi Mosque and slaughter worshipers inside it. "Theresa" is the name of a leading settler who took part in arranging the massacre together with the chief of staff and three Israeli leaders. Operation Theresa was the literal outcome of the seven agreements Rabin signed with settlers leaders, the agreements which AL-SHA'B publicized a few months back.

Information reveals that sophisticated Israeli weapons were handed to the settlers 48 hours before the massacre. The weapons were transported from the United States by the terrorist Zionist groups, who are still in possession of these weapons.

According to our information, the criminal who was said to have committed the al-Ibrahimi massacre was an officer in the Israeli Army.

Minister Revokes Decision To Expel Foreign Press

NC0803172294 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 4 Mar 94 p 7

[Text] The Interior Ministry issued a sudden decision on Thursday, 24 February, expelling two foreign correspondents, the chief of REUTER, Cairo, and another Western reporter (believed to be AFP's), to punish them for covering acts of violence and publishing reports without checking out their validity.

The decision was made at the peak of police wrath at foreign correspondents. A week ago, the Interior Ministry summoned the AFP bureau chief and reproached him for circulating inaccurate reports. He was accused of hostility to Egypt and threatened with expulsion.

AL-SHA'B has learned that the Ministry of Information was not notified of the expulsion decision, but the information minister learned of the matter at the last moment—before the decision was enforced—from the foreign correspondents association. He made immediate contacts that resulted in revoking the expulsion decision.

Not only did Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif revoke the decision, he even met with the board of the Foreign Correspondents Association last Saturday and voiced his confidence in them. He assured them that his ministry and not the Ministry of Interior, will be responsible for dealing with foreign correspondents.

It is rumored that the information minister's decision has created a crisis between his ministry and the Ministry of Interior.

Islamic Group Claims Responsibility for 2 Bombings

NC0803171794 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 4 Mar 94 p 7

[Text] The Islamic Group has announced that it detonated two bombs in front of the Nile Tower in al-Jizah, which houses the Egyptian-American Business Council, the International Bank of Commerce, and the Transmed Travel Agency. The group said the detonations were in retaliation for the criminal act committed in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron.

A statement by the Islamic Group said the two operations were the beginning of what it termed revenge for the al-Ibrahimi Mosque martyrs and noted that revenge will continue in the end of the month of Ramadan [sentence as published].

25 'Terrorists' Arrested for Recent Bombings

NC0803163994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1550 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—The State Security Investigation Service [SSIS] has arrested 25 terrorists responsible for the recent wave of bomb attacks on banks in Cairo and al-Jizah. Revealing the information, an Interior Ministry source said that SSIS officers obtained search warrants from the Public Prosecution Office and stormed terrorist hideouts in Cairo, al-Jizah, Suez, al-Qalyubiyah, and al-Sharqiyah.

The source said that among those arrested is a man who was in charge of liaison between the group's [not further specified] members at home and abroad.

The source added that at the time of his arrest this terrorist was in possession of an explosive charge matching those used in the recent bombings, dynamite sticks, and foreign currency.

Among those arrested are 'Irfan Muhammad Hasan al-Khuli, sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labor in connection with the 1993 military case involving a shooting in Zinhum area in Cairo; Yasir Fathi Muhammad Ahmad Fawwaz, who is wanted by the police for involvement in terrorist attacks including one against a tourist bus in Asyut; Muhammad Fawzi Muhammad Ibrahim al-Sayyid, a leading member of the organization [not further specified] in Suez, who is wanted by the police for involvement in acts of violence in Suez; and Ahmad 'Abd-al-Fattah Sayyid 'Uthman, a member of the organization [not further specified] in east Cairo.

The Higher State Security Prosecution Office is interrogating the defendants. According to the source, the suspects have admitted involvement in the recent wave of bomb attacks against several banks in Cairo and al-Jizah. They also admitted plotting to assassinate public figures and policemen.

The source said suspects' confessions confirmed information available to the SSIS that some fugitive terrorist leaders—some still in Afghanistan and others who have returned from there—are involved in planning, giving assignments, and financing the said terrorist moves. These fugitive leaders are:

—Tal'at Yasin Muhammad Hammam, a fugitive sentenced to death in the case of the Returnees From Afghanistan Organization.

—Islam Ahmad Muhammad al-Gharmi, a fugitive leader trained in Afghanistan to carry out bombings.

Husam Muhammad Khamis Nuwayr, a fugitive terrorist leader wanted in the case of Dr. Rif'at al-Mahjub's assassination.

One of the detainees, the security source added, is a fugitive leader sentenced to life imprisonment at hard labor in Military Crimes Case 19/93, concerning the shooting in Zinhum region.

Another detainee is a fugitive in Yemen tasked to receive sophisticated training in Afghanistan on remotely-controlled bombings. He was sent to Egypt about four months ago to take part in planned suicidal operations targeting the motorcade of an important figure.

The Interior Ministry praised the public's positive involvement in confronting and foiling the criminal schemes of the terrorists and extremists.

Islamic Fundamentalist Comments on Political Events

BR0803125894 Copenhagen INFORMATION in Danish 25 Feb 94 p 9

[Report on interview with Egyptian Islamic fundamentalist Tal'at Fu'ad Qassim by Charlotte Aagaard; place and date not given]

[Text] In the past week a hitherto unknown man, Tal'at Fu'ad Qassim, has come under media spotlight because, as a supporter of the militant Islamic group Al-Gama'a Islamiya, he has been accused of turning Denmark into a base for "terror" against the Egyptian Government and of having encouraged violence against foreigners in Egypt.

All of this has happened since Qassim obtained political asylum in Denmark.

In an exclusive interview with INFORMATION, however, he rejects the accusations, and asserts his right—on an equal footing with thousands of other refugees in Denmark—to maintain his involvement in political developments in his own country.

A Committed Man

And committed he is. You sense it at once as he walks into the living room on the fifth floor of an apartment block in Valby.

Committed, reserved, shy, and worried. These are the words that come to mind as he sits down on the couch, keeping on his light brown, Afghan camel-hair hat, supplementing the Islamist's traditional uniform: long white robe, baggy trousers, long black beard and short hair.

It is Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting, so it is only INFORMATION's reporter, the photographer and the six-year old son of the house who are offered juice, biscuits, and fresh dates in welcome.

Tal'at Fu'ad Qassim recounts the beginnings of his political activity in Al-Gama'a Islamiya during his student days at the university of Assuit, situated on the banks of the Nile in central Egypt. At that time Al

Gama'a was a student movement, but today the group, which is thought to number 10,000 militant activists and a far larger group of sympathizers, is engaged in an armed struggle against the Egyptian government. In Assuit, Qassim was studying engineering, but was imprisoned for his part in student riots just after he had completed his exams.

He spent eight years in an Egyptian jail until December 1989, when he succeeded in escaping, first to Peshawar in Pakistan, the Islamic Mujahidin's headquarters. Here he was the chief editor of the paper AL-MURABITUN, and head of the Arab press federation. There was no question of active resistance to the Communist enemy in Kabul, however.

In May 1992 he came to Denmark as a result of an invitation to hold a series of lectures, sought political asylum, and was granted it, partly on account of a death sentence passed on him in absentia by an Egyptian military court in January, 1993.

His view is that the accusations—which range from the attempted overthrow of the government, complicity in the murder of politicians, to unlawful possession of weapons—are the fabrications of the Egyptian Government. Amnesty International pronounced the trial unfair due to the absence of a defence and lack of the right to appeal.

Today, Tal'at Fu'ad Qassim describes his role in Al-Gama'a Islamiya as that of a source of ideological inspiration.

"I have not had any physical contact with Al-Gama'a in Egypt since I left the country. The link is on a spiritual level. Perhaps people read my publications or hear my speeches." Qassim stresses, however, that his knowledge of the organization makes him fully capable of speaking on its behalf.

Political Commitment

Tal'at Fu'ad Qassim flatly denies the claim that he is a part of an international network of Al-Gama'a people who, from their position in exile, lead the struggle and organize violent action against Mubarak's government:

"It is an outright lie. It is an attempt on the part of the Egyptian Government to justify its actions towards Al-Gama'a activists and to take attention away from the government's failed economic and social policy."

However, he is not prepared to give up the right to political involvement.

"I came to Denmark to live in peace. I have no intention of creating problems here, but I cannot ignore what is happening in Egypt. I do the same as tens of thousands of Lebanese, Palestinian, or Iranian refugees. I do, after all, have the right to hold an opinion on what is happening in my home country—and the right to express it."

Qassim told us he was disappointed that his right to asylum in Denmark has been publicly questioned.

"If I am unwelcome in Denmark, then I am ready to take the first plane back to Egypt and face my death sentence. But if I am handed over, no Dane will be able to look in the mirror without seeing hypocrisy staring him in the face."

For the moment, extradition to Egypt is impossible according to INFORMATION's sources, simply because Denmark is a co-signatory of a number of conventions which prohibit the handing over of people condemned to death.

Violence Against Foreigners

Another claim which has been put forward by the media is that in the Egyptian newspaper AL-AHALI, Tal'at Fu'ad Qassim allegedly incited violence against foreigners, including Danes, who travel to Egypt as tourists, work, or invest there.

This includes, among others, F.L. Smith, A.P. Moller, and Aarhus Flydedok. Denmark also finances a number of aid projects in Egypt.

"I have never given an interview to the newspaper in question. It is a fabrication. Al-Gama'a Islamiya printed a communique warning foreigners against going to Egypt out of concern for their safety, because they are in confrontation with the government. It is every Muslim's duty to ensure the safety of visitors, and that safety cannot be guaranteed at the moment. Therefore it would be unwise to travel to Egypt."

"Would a tourist be likely to go on holiday to Sarajevo, Mogadishu, or Baghdad? It is the same in Egypt today. Egypt is involved in a violent confrontation and it would not be safe for tourists to go there."

He also finds it "difficult to imagine good Muslims being involved in attacks on innocent tourists." Instead, he accuses forces within the Egyptian government of being behind the attacks on tourists which until now have cost seven foreigners their lives and wounded dozens of others. The purpose of this, according to Qassim, is to justify the brutality used against the Islamic opposition and to discredit it.

Tal'at Fu'ad Qassim thinks that there is one good explanation for the furore caused by a series of articles on him.

"Since the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism, Islamophobia, the fear of Islam, has spread like wildfire. I cannot understand why people here in the West are so keen to create a boogeyman. It only serves as a provocation." Qassim wants to see more objectivity in the descriptions of what is happening in the Islamic world.

Asked whether he is unable to understand Danes' fear of Islam, when they have the deaths of foreign tourists in

Algeria and Egypt as well as the bloody Iranian revolution at the back of their minds, he answered:

"Yes, I can well understand that. But then the Danes must also appreciate how ordinary Egyptians feel. The Egyptians can be compared to a dove in a cage. Normally doves are very peaceful animals, but if they are put into a cage it is only natural that they peck your finger. When the Muslims in Egypt shake off the dictatorship and introduce an Islamic system, people will see that there is nothing to be afraid of."

When the Islamic forces take over power in Egypt, which, according to Qassim will happen "before most people expect it", foreigners will again be welcome and assured of their safety in Egypt, he promised.

Sudan

Government, Rebel Talks Set for 17 Mar in Nairobi

EA0803204594 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1630 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Excerpt] Nairobi 8 Mar (SUNA)—The Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development committee concerned with solving the Sudanese dispute has fixed 17 March as the date for the start of negotiations between the Sudanese Government and the two wings of the rebel movement, in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. [passage omitted]

SPLM Plans To Hold First 'National' Conference

PM0803172594 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Mar 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Uthman Mirghani: "Garang Movement To Hold Its First General Conference in Southern Sudan"]

[Excerpt] London—The Garang movement yesterday confirmed that it will hold its first national conferernce next Saturday in southern Sudan. Akol Akor told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT from the movement's office in Nairobi that "the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement [SPLM] conference will be held under the chairmanship of Colonel John Garang, will discuss a number of important issues, and will be attended by 500-600 representatives of various sectors in the region."

Akor also confirmed that the conference would be held in one of the areas under Garang's control in southern Sudan. He declined to say exactly where for security reasons. He said that conference would last several days and would discuss over 20 issues. [passage omitted]

Returnees Say Rebels Receiving Western Support

EA0803200394 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 2245 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Returnees from the rebel movement from Nubah Mountains have affirmed their complete readiness to join the march of development and support the peace initiatives in the country. The returnees disclosed in a statement delivered at the periodic SUNA forum held yesterday that they were receiving military support from Western states. The returnees explained that the rebel movement is violating the human rights of the people of Nubah who joined it, in a manner contradicting international conventions.

Saudi Arabia

King Husayn Performs Pilgrimage, Meets With Fahd

PM0903111094 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 9 Mar 94 p 1

[Report by Sulayman Nimr: "King Husayn Performs Minor Pilgrimage, Holds Talks With King Fahd"]

[Text] Jeddah—King Husayn yesterday evening performed minor pilgrimage rituals in holy Mecca. He had arrived in Jeddah at midday in his first visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia since the Gulf crisis erupted in the summer of 1990. King Husayn used to visit holy Mecca to perform minor pilgrimage on al-Qadr night, 27 Ramadan, every year, and to visit the tomb of the great prophet. But he could not do that for over three and a half years because of the Gulf crisis.

King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz received the Jordanian monarch late last night in holy Mecca, where the custodian of the two holy mosques is spending the last 10 days of Ramadan close to the Kaaba.

The meeting between the Saudi and Jordanian monarchs is the first between the two leaders, who were separated by their positions during the crisis of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Riyadh considered Jordan's position substantially supportive of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. What further aggravated the crisis in relations between the countries—which is happening for the first time—was the position of the Jordanian media and press toward Saudi Arabia during and after the crisis.

Arab diplomatic circles hope that the expected meeting [al-liqa' al-mutawaqqa'] between the custodian of the two holy mosques and the Jordanian monarch will lead to opening a new page in inter-Arab relations based on sound and clear foundations. The circles said that there is a positive atmosphere with the king vis-a-vis the gradual restoration to health [of relations] with the Arab states which adopted positions that disappointed the Saudis during the Gulf crisis. In this connection the circles cited the custodian of the two holy mosques' meeting over a month ago with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, who visited Saudi Arabia to perform minor pilgrimage. He was received by King Fahd in Riyadh. The sources also cited the continued normalization of Saudi-Yemeni relations, which culminated last month in the Saudi monarch's reception of 'Ali Salim al-Bid, deputy chairman of the Yemeni Presidential Council.

It was noted that King Husayn and the delegation accompanying him—which included al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, head of the Royal Court, and some members of the ruling Jordanian family—were accorded a reception usually accorded to Arab and Islamic leaders who arrive in the Kingdom to perform minor pilgrimage. The king and the delegation were received at King 'Abd-al-'Aziz Airport in Jeddah by Prince Majid Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the amir of the holy Mecca region. And King Husayn stayed at al-Hamra' Palace.

Yemen

North, South Reportedly Bracing for Combat

NC0803145294 Paris AFP in English 1322 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Dubai, March 8 (AFP)—Rival northern and southern troops have reinforced their positions across Yemen, bracing for renewed fighting.

The build-up came despite growing opposition in the main cities to any spread of violence, the YEMEN TIMES reported in its latest edition seen here.

The English-language weekly published two maps showing where units loyal to President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, a northerner, and his southern rival, Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, were being swelled by reinforcements.

These moves could lead "at any time" to a "large-scale conflict", since there had been no political settlement to the seven-month-old crisis, the paper warned.

North and South Yemen united in May 1990, but a crisis erupted last August when al-Bid refused to take up his duties in the northern capital Sanaa, demanding political, economic and security reforms.

The armies of the two former states, which each have about 50,000 men, were never merged after unification.

According to the YEMEN TIMES maps, rival units are facing each others in 'Amran, Ma'rib, Dhamar and Harib, in the northern part of the country.

Clashes in the past two weeks in Abyan province have already killed more than 20 people and left dozens of others wounded, sources have said.

It was here a few dozen kilometers (miles) east of Aden that the largest build-up appeared to be taking place despite a reconciliation agreement signed by Salih and al-Bid on February 20 in Amman, Jordan, the paper said.

In the south troops were preparing for action in Qataba, Mukayras and near the port city of Aden, the former South Yemeni capital.

The regular army units on each side were also counting on tribal support if a large scale war erupted.

President Salih has already received the backing of the powerful Hashed tribal confederation, led by the Muslim fundamentalist Speaker of the Parliament Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar.

And Vice-President al-Bid has deployed militiamen around Aden, and is being backed by the Bakil tribe, Hashid's rival.

Witnesses have also reported seeing military equipment being regularly flown into Sanaa and Aden from abroad. The exact nature and origin of those equipment is still unknown.

The recent build-up in war preparations prompted Sanaa university lecturers to launch a "popular resistance" movement last week to make the "politicians listen to reason."

Hundreds of people in Sanaa, Ta'iz and Hudaydah, in the north, and Aden, in the south, have signed a petition opposing violence and demanding that the Amman agreement be implemented.

And organisers say that it has won the support of some military officers from both sides.

Several Yemeni leaders, including al-Bid, have also called for a "civil disobedience" campaign to resolve the crisis peacefully.

General Warns of Military Confrontation

JN0903094494 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 9 Mar 94 p 1

[Report by Hamdan al-Hajj]

[Text] Brigadier General Mujahid Abu-Shawarib, Yemeni deputy prime minister, has called on President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and his deputy 'Ali Salim al-Bid to be rational and to give utmost priority to the interests of the homeland and nation. He urged them to stop making mistakes in order to save Yemen from the bad consequences of letting things continue as they are.

In a telephone interview with AL-DUSTUR, Abu-Shawarib said that after all the efforts that have been made, he believes there are people working for separation. Based on this belief, he said that he had resigned from the dialogue committee because he does not want to suffer the condemnation of history, because all those who contribute to the foiling of unity will be condemned by history. He said Yemen will endure, and the faith of Yemenis in their unity will continue, and individuals will be gone, sooner or later.

Brigadier General Abu-Shawarib expressed pessimism about Yemen's foreseeable future, because the president and his deputy, and the People's Congress Party and the Yemeni Socialist party, continue making mistakes visible to local, regional, and international public opinion. Each party is trying to show it is eager to maintain unity, but this is not the real situation, he and his colleagues in the dialogue committee have concluded.

Brigadier General Abu-Shawarib expected something to happen in the near future unless reason prevails. He said it is a matter of time. If recriminations continue, they will lead to a military confrontation, and Yemeni unity will be the scapegoat.

He prayed to God to save Yemen from the plots of its enemies inside and outside, especially since the situation has reached the point in which reform is useless unless things are returned to normalcy, and living consciences give priority to Yemen and the Yemeni interest.

Brigadier General Abu-Shawarib highly valued the role played by His Majesty King Husayn toward the signing of the document of pledge and accord, and his eagerness to maintain the Yemeni's unity and fraternal spirit, and his desire to do all he can to preserve Yemeni unity. At the same time, he expressed appreciation of the Omani role in this field, and hoped that other Arab parties will play good roles that serve the interests of Yemen and the Yemenis.

Brigadier General Abu-Shawarib hoped that the Yemeni president and his deputy will return to the right path and do what is for the good of Yemen in order to save their country from dangers known only to God.

Interior Minister on 'Terrorists,' Accord

NC0803133594 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 5 Mar 94 p 6

[Report by Amin Muhammad Amin in Sanaa]

[Text] Yemeni Interior Minister Brigadier General Yahya al-Mutawakkil has stated that the al-Jihad Organization and the Afghan Arabs who returned from Afghanistan are the ones behind the recent assassinations in Yemen, not the General People's Congress Party, which participates in the ruling coalition in Yemen.

Yahya al-Mutawakkil affirmed in an interview with AL-AHRAM that arresting the masterminds and criminals of the organized assassinations in Yemen is the joint responsibility of the General People's Congress and the Socialist Party.

He added that the majority of these terrorists are based in the southern governorates such as Abyan, Hadhramaut, and Shabwah, as well as in the northern governorates such as Sanaa and the areas of Khawlan and Marid [place name as published].

He pointed out that those involved in the assassinations are well known but all have not been arrested because it is not easy to do so. He clarified that the terrorists are currently hiding out in mountainous areas where huge military forces are needed to track them down.

On the Pledge and Accord document, he said: The document came to express the aspirations of the people to find a system that guarantees the maintenance of unity and paves the way for local government. He pointed out that the expectation that the crisis would be resolved immediately after the document was signed in

Amman was not accurate since it is too serious and complicated to be resolved by a mere signature.

He explained that the conflicts started after united Yemen was established. Because of everyone's joy over unity, they forgot to take needed measures, such as merging the armed and security forces and institutions and finding a unified course the state should follow. The differences emerged very clearly after parliamentary elections were held. These elections revealed the loyalty of the parties in the north and south to their old bodies, foremost of which is the Army. This deepened the rift between the two sides.

He said: What is happening in the Yemeni arena does not represent the end of the road because Yemen is currently going through a state of upheaval.

Al-Mutawwakil expected the military skirmishes between Abyan and Mudiyah to stop next week and the forces to withdraw to their original positions.

On the surprise postponement of the cabinet meeting that was to convene in Aden by Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, he clarified that a request was made to postpone the meeting so that its success could be guaranteed, especially since the agenda proposed by the prime minister is not enough. He added that he will convene an extraordinary cabinet meeting after the 'Id al-Fitr. On the demands made by the Socialist Party to remove the military camps from the cities, he said: The pledge document has specified certain steps for doing so, however, the current atmosphere does not allow this demand to be met. Therefore, we need to hold talks and agree over a joint method to implement all articles of the pledge document gradually.

Regarding the participation of new mediators, including Arab and other countries, to implement the document, he said: There is no justification for new mediation because the People's Congress is in constant and direct contact with the leaders of the Socialist Party. He ruled out that developments in the Yemeni arena will lead to restoring the split between the north and the south. He said it is difficult to accuse foreign powers of having interfered in what is happening. However, unity does have some enemies and there are some sides that wish to redivide Yemen into two parts.

Regarding the recent problem of foreigners being kidnapped, he said it is new to Yemeni society but is part of the crisis the country is going through. This crisis has given tribes the chance to carry out kidnappings to blackmail the state.

Brigadier General Yahya al-Mutawakkil affirmed that the security forces have taken all necessary measures to guarantee that such incidents are not repeated.

Libya's al-Kharrubi, Arab League Team Depart Sanaa

JN0803211994 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Brother Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, member of the Revolution Command Council and inspector general in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, left Sanaa today following a three-day visit to our country. During his visit he conveyed messages from brother Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi to both President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. The messages deal with issues of joint interest to both fraternal countries and with current developments in our country.

He was seen off by Deputy Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Anisi, and a number of officials.

An Arab League delegation, led by Staff Major General Muhammad Sa'id Bayraqdar, assistant secretary general and head of the Arab League's Department for Military Affairs, also left Sanaa today following a visit of several days to our country.

In a statement to the Yemeni News Agency, SABA', the league military official said that he met with officials in our country and discussed with them ways to end the military repercussions that have recently prevailed in the country. He described his visit to our country as positive and successful, and that he had formed a good impression. He also wished Yemen and the Yemeni people progress and prosperity.

He was seen off by brother Yahya al-Shami, deputy head of the Arab Homeland Department at the Yemeni Foreign Ministry, and a representative of the Presidential Council's Protocol Department.

Saddam Reportedly Threatens To Attack North

NC0903044494 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 5 March 94

[Text] The Iraqi opposition in Salah-al-Din has monitored new military movements on the contact line between the forces of the ruling regime in Baghdad and Iraqi Kurdistan. The opposition stressed that in a speech on 17 January, tyrant Saddam threatened that he would restore the north and (?celebrate) the 'Id [words indistinct] the United Nations [words indistinct] that it is monitoring the situation.

A statement by the Iraqi Transmission Authority [hay'at al-irsal al-'iraqiyah] in Salah-al-Din said the regime replaced its Armed Forces on the contact line in February. The 10th Armored Division pulled out of the sector of the 1st Army Corps in Makhmur to the Governorate of al-'Amarah near the border with Iran. The 1st Automatic Infantry Division was transferred from Mosul to Makhmur.

An Austrian correspondent in northern Iraq has reported that forces of tyrant Saddam Husayn have almost finished their preparations for a new military attack against the Kurdish areas. Alan George, a correspondent for the daily DER STANDARD, said he saw a military buildup and armored forces belonging to Saddam Husayn's regime on the contact line with the Kurdish cities. They were moving and in a state of preparedness for military action. He said an attack by Saddam's forces against the Kurds would constitute a direct challenge to the forces entrusted to provide international protection for the Kurds there. The Austrian paper said Saddam, revealing his hostile intentions, hinted to his senior military commanders during a meeting with them in Mosul on 23 February that he intends to [words indistinct] during March and plans [words indistinct]. It is known that several Western countries, including the United States and Britain, have warned Iraq's tyrant against committing a new foolish act after monitoring Saddam's forces' movements toward the Kurdish areas.

Baghdad Informs UN of U.S. U-2 Air 'Violations'

JN0803130694 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0940 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] New York, 8 Mar (INA)—Iraq has informed the UN General Secretariat that the U.S. U-2 spy aircraft has violated Iraq's airspace on the pretext of conducting air surveys for the UN Special Commission.

In a letter UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Ghali received yesterday, Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf said this aircraft violated Iraq's airspace on 26 January and on 7, 15, 25 February, flying over vast Iraqi areas after which it left the Iraqi airspace for its base in Saudi Arabia. He explained that these four violations raised to 196 the number of violations by this aircraft.

Al-Sahhaf added: While condemning and denouncing these unjustified violations of our airspace, we stress the constant Iraqi position that this aircraft is used for purposes other than those specified by the Security Council and that its activity harms Iraq's sovereignty and security.

Al-Sahhaf continued: We emphasize Iraq's constant request for employing Iraqi means in the Special Commission's work instead of foreign means in order to exclude the possibility of using the latter for purposes that harm Iraq's sovereignty and security. Your correct assessment of this aircraft's nature and real task was published in THE NEW YORK TIMES on 16 November 1993, in which you said: I do not want a James Bond spy aircraft at the United Nations. This assessment requires that the United Nations should immediately reconsider the use of this aircraft in violating Iraq's airspace in a way that conflicts with the UN Charter's objectives and principles which call for respecting the equality and sovereignty of all UN member states.

Saddam Receives Cable From Islamic Jihad Leader

JN0603201994 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Mar 94

[Text] Baghdad, 6 Mar (INA)—As'ad Bayyud al-Tamimi, leader of the Islamic Jihad-Bayt al-Maqdis movement, has stressed that Iraq is, God willing, strengthened by Islam, the Koran, and the faithful leadership.

In a cable he sent to President Saddam Husayn on the occasion of holy Ramadan, al-Tamimi beseeched God Almighty to grant the Muslims victory at his excellency's hands and to defeat the infidels who are colluding against the Muslim nation so that Iraq can devote its total attention to the cause of Palestine, which is now being sold at the U.S. and world slave market.

Al-Tamimi added that the polytheists were defeated in the two Qadisiyahs and will, God Almighty willing, soon be defeated and the flag of Allahu Akbar [God is great] will fly over the heads of the soldiers marching on Jerusalem, as they marched in Ramadan to the battle of Badr and to Mecca, the birthplace of Islam.

Ramadan Receives Catholic Patriarchs' Delegation

JN0603152394 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1340 GMT 6 Mar 94

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 6 Mar (INA)—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has stressed that Iraqis from all faiths stood united to defend Iraq in the glorious Saddam al-Qadisiyah battle and the immortal Mother of Battles epic and offered sacrifices and martyrs on the path of victory.

During a meeting with a delegation of Eastern Catholic patriarchs, Ramadan said that the continued blockade against Iraq and the starving of its people is considered

an aggression against humanity because it is immoral and illegal. He said that the world public is now aware of the methods of falsehood and allegations used by the United States and its allies to realize their evil intentions.

Taha Yasin Ramadan stressed that the methods of injustice and aggression will not continue and that the principles of justice, right, and humanity will triumph. He stressed that, through their reconstruction drive and determination, the Iraqis have set an example of steadfastness and determination in their defense of their sovereignty and existence.

He praised the visit of the Eastern Catholic patriarchs, which they made under the circumstances of the unjust blockade. [passage omitted]

Delegation Ends Visit

JN0603173294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1520 GMT 6 Mar 94

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 6 Mar (INA)—A delegation representing the Eastern Catholic patriarchs left Baghdad today following a one-week visit to Iraq.

In a statement to INA, Maronite Church Patriarch Bulus Asil Sa'adah praised the support and care given by President Saddam Husayn to the places of worship, churches, and clergymen. Patriarch Sa'adah said President Saddam Husayn is a courageous and wise leader. [passage omitted]

Rabin on Coalition, Hebron Issue, PLO Talks

TA0803164994 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Telephone interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Razi Barqay on 8 March—recorded]

[Text] [Barqay] You are experiencing hard times.

[Rabin] Times are not easy, but that is the way it is, and we have to deal with the problems and solve them.

[Barqay] Do you fear acts of retaliation? Do you have information regarding expected acts of revenge for the Hebron massacre?

[Rabin] Look, terror groups which were active before may have greater motivation to exacerbate their acts following the massacre in the Cave of the Patriarchs. Had they been able to carry out murderous terror acts even before the events in Hebron, they would have done so, because this is their way, this is their aim. They want to kill Israelis and the peace process. The murder in the Cave of the Patriarchs may have increased their motivation. That is why we imposed a closure banning entry into the territory of sovereign Israel, including united Jerusalem.

[Barqay] My question, sir, was whether you have information on preparations, new squads, something that....

[Rabin, interrupting] We have reports that there is growing motivation for retaliation. Terror organizations have announced that they intend to take revenge. In view of this, we are getting ready.

[Barqay] How long will you keep the residents under closure?

[Rabin] We reconsider the closure on a daily basis or every few days, in order to determine whether the territory has calmed down and the threat diminished. Furthermore, we will not lift it all at the same time. The most important factor in our considerations is security.

[Barqay] The uneasy security situation has led you to try to expand the coalition, among other things. Will Tzomet's joining the government give the government legitimacy in terms of the right wing?

[Rabin] I sought to expand the basis of the coalition even before the tragic event in Hebron took place. We started initial contacts with Tzomet before the Hebron massacre. I initiated them, and I will not discuss how they were conducted. They did not follow the incident. The same holds true for SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim].

[Barqay] What are the chances of Refa'el Eytan's joining the coalition, in view of the opposition from Meretz?

[Rabin] I will not deal with speculation. The Labor Bureau and caucus approved negotiations with factions that accept the government's guidelines and will not dispute agreements we have made with the PLO. This opens the door to negotiations with SHAS, as well as with Tzomet.

[Barqay] Will you summon Eytan and others from Tzomet...?

[Rabin, interrupting] He will know when I decide, and not from you.

[Barqay] Over the past few days, Eytan has made some remarks that contradict the government guidelines.

[Rabin] That may be. I also heard some cabinet ministers making remarks that I do not believe to always be in accordance with the government policies. I distinguish remarks from.... [pauses] Tzomet and its leader are not in the coalition today; therefore, there is no reason for him not to say whatever he wants. If and when he joins the coalition, it will be a different story.

[Barqay] You say that ministers made remarks contradicting the government platform and guidelines. Do you mean remarks favoring the evacuation of settlers from Hebron?

[Rabin] I will not elaborate on this. I would rather speak personally to any such minister. In general, I can tell you that such things happen.

[Barqay] Let me ask you directly: Are you in favor of evacuating the settlers from Hebron?

[Rabin] I will not answer this. According to the Declaration of Principles [DOP], all settlements remain in place. On the basis of the negotiations with the PLO, I do not have to do this. Hence, this is currently not on the agenda.

[Barqay] Personally, do you not think that their being there is a provocation?

[Rabin] Look, the last time I was prime minister, I supported settlement in Qiryat Arba' and opposed settlement in the heart of Hebron. The previous government did many things—not only in Hebron but also in other settlements in areas densely populated by Palestinians—to which I opposed. Today, we are facing a reality, and our problem is to deal with it. The important thing today is to resume the negotiations with the PLO as soon as possible. I believe this would be the best answer to those who oppose the Cairo agreement and the DOP.

[Barqay] We hear that 'Arafat wants to bring in armed observers as a precondition for resuming the negotiations.

[Rabin] I do not conduct negotiations with him through you.

[Barqay] Do you accept this demand?

[Rabin] I do not conduct negotiations with him through you.

[Barqay] Can you estimate when the parties will return to the negotiating table? Days, weeks, months?

[Rabin] I would not like to engage in estimates when I do not have data that would justify making such estimates. There has been no agreement by the PLO and the Palestinians to resume negotiations.

[Barqay] Newspaper columnists these days describe you as someone who is very uncertain, wavering between the dovish attitude of Yosi Sarid and Meretz and the hawkish stands of Refa'el Eytan. Do have any second thoughts regarding the agreement you made with the PLO?

[Rabin] I have no second thoughts. The government and I determined stands and the path we will follow. I adhere to them. I also want to expand the basis of the coalition in order to make their implementation possible. Naturally, in a coalition, there is a broad spectrum of stands and attitudes. I believe that the government policy—as expressed in the way the peace talks have been conducted—expresses the line to which I adhere. I feel the pain of terror acts. I condemn every act of terror, and I hurt twice as much when a loathsome Jewish murderer carries out a despicable act.

[Barqay] As we speak, the Shamgar inquiry commission is beginning its deliberations. We know that you had some reservations about setting it up....

[Rabin, interrupting] A commission of inquiry was set up. I respect it, and I believe it will shed light on the truth.

[Barqay] In view of this, do you not believe the time has come for you to appoint a full-time defense minister?

[Rabin] Two previous commissions of inquiry—one set up after the Yom Kippur War and one after the war of Lebanon—were established when there was a full-time defense minister. Such events take place regardless of whether the post of defense minister was separate from that of the prime minister. I neither believe this is necessary nor am I in any way considering it.

[Barqay] You will stay on as defense minister and prime minister?

[Rabin] Yes.

[Barqay] And you have full confidence in Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq?

[Rabin] I have full confidence in the defense establishment, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and its commanders, the security services, and the Border Police. This does not mean that a mishap can never happen here or there. I have full confidence in the IDF high command, from the chief of staff down, and in the Shin Bet men. Regrettably, the public does not know enough about the burden the IDF, Shin Bet, the Border Police, and the Israel Police are shouldering; neither does it know how many terrible things were prevented thanks to their efficient activity. I wish to state here: The IDF and the security services deserve our every praise.

[Barqay] Despite some mishaps here and there?

[Rabin] I made my point clear.

[Barqay] Mr. Rabin, how will your coalition look in two weeks?

[Rabin] I will not engage in nor do I have need of prophecies. You may need to interview me, but this does not compel me to answer every question, especially when things are not yet finalized. I will only say definite things when I am able to bring them before the Knesset, and then you will know them anyway.

Rabin Urges Syria, Lebanon To Calm Region

TA0803173994 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Eli Nisan at the Knesset on 8 March—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles; translated from the Hebrew]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Nisan] How will yesterday's terror attack against the SLA [South Lebanese Army] soldiers affect the status of the SLA and the security zone?

[Rabin] We have no intention of letting these incidents go unnoticed. We will take steps when we see fit in order to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. Those who perpetrated the attacks will be punished.

[Nisan] Are you now sending signals to those who perpetrated the attacks?

[Rabin] I am not sending any signals. We are in a state of war and not a dialogue with Hizballah and the Palestinian rejectionist terror organizations. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the Lebanese and Syrian Governments must do their share in calming the situation if they ever wish to promote the peace process.

Rabin on PLO Move at UNSC, Status of Closure

TA0803175794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee today that the dialogue with the PLO on the resumption of the negotiations continues but no agreement has yet been reached. According to him, the emissaries he sent to Cairo to confer with 'Arafat clarified Israel's policy in the aftermath of the massacre, to the effect that the negotiations must be accelerated. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports:

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] [Nir] Referring to the contacts with the UN Security Council [UNSC] on passing a resolution similar to Resolution 799, adopted in the aftermath of the deportation of members of

Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], Prime Minister Rabin said that Israel is perturbed by the attempt to include Jerusalem in the definition of occupied territories. We are dealing with this issue in cooperation with the Americans, he said, but they, too, have encountered difficulties in their contacts with other countries.

Summing up this chapter, Rabin said he believes the Palestinians want to resume the negotiations, but that they first want to score some achievement in the Security Council. Furthermore, from now on they will make every possible effort to raise the question of the safety of the Palestinians in the territories in whatever international forum possible, arguing that the Jewish settlers are given arms while the Palestinians do not possess any. [passage omitted]

As for the talk by prominent settlers about a civil uprising, Rabin said he had asked the legal establishment to deal with the issue and is now waiting for them to move their ass, as he put it. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 8 March carries a related report on Rabin's appearance before the committee, adding: "The prime minister noted that the Religious Kibbutz Movement would like to either evacuate Netzarim in the Gaza Strip or exempt it from paying its outstanding debt for property it had purchased. I consulted the finance minister about this, and it may very well be that all of Netzarim's property will be transferred to the Treasury, Rabin noted. He confirmed that inhabitants of Qiryat Arba' had inquired about the possibility of getting government aid and housing if they leave the place. The Construction and Housing Ministry will look into the possibility of helping the applicants on a personal basis but not as a policy, the prime minister said."

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 8 March notes that Rabin told the committee that "IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officers contend that 1,000 soldiers must be deployed in Hebron in order to ensure the safety of the Jewish settlers in the city. He defined the situation in Hebron as a time bomb." The prime minister went on to say "that at this point, there has been no change in policy with regard to the closure. Consequently, he will not heed the Palestinians' demands to increase the number of worshipers allowed to pray on the Temple Mount on 11 March, the last Friday of Ramadan. He added that the decision to evacuate Jewish worshipers from the Western Wall last Friday was made with his approval. It was a one-time decision which does not point to a systematic trend, he said."]

Cabinet Eases Closure, Debates Settler Evacuation

TA0603174794 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 6 Mar 94

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal]

[Excerpts] Today's cabinet meeting, which was held under the cloud of a government crisis, addressed an issue which has a majority support only in the present cabinet composition. The issue was the immediate evacuation of the Jewish settlement of Hebron. The Meretz ministers and Ministers Bar'am, Namir, and Ben-Eli'ezer were in favor of the evacuation. The cabinet will not vote on the issue before next week. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, Minister Sarid is working on an alternative proposal to be raised if the evacuation idea falls through: Rabin and Peres will announce that the future of the centers of friction, such as the Jewish settlements in Hebron, Netzarim, and Kfar Darom, is to be decided within a few months, rather than after the interim period in five years. Sarid stressed that any decision on the settlements' future will be a purely Israeli decision completely unlinked to the negotiations with the Palestinians.

Rabin and Peres did not announce their views on the matter, although they said last week that they were against such a move. Both Minister Tzur and Minister Shetrit were opposed. [passage omitted]

Also this morning, the cabinet decided to somewhat ease the closure on the territories. According to the decision, 4,500 Arab men and women above the age of 40 will receive permits to work in Israel in the coming days.

On another matter, Attorney General Mikha'el Ben-Ya'ir advised the ministers that several persons, who had applauded the Hebron massacre, will be charged with agitation by the end of the week. Attorney General Ben-Ya'ir reported legal difficulties in outlawing Kakh and Kahana Hay.

No-Confidence Motion Filed Over Settlers' Treatment

TA0803162494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Moledet has submitted a motion of no confidence in the government due to what it terms the government's maltreatment of the Jewish settlers in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht points out that the motion will be discussed on 14 March, together with another motion submitted by the National Religious Party.

Likud, Tzomet File No Confidence Over Jewish Evacuation

TA0903114094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 9 Mar 94

[Text] The Likud faction has submitted a motion of no confidence in the government over the evacuation of Western Wall worshipers and the plan to move Jews out of Hebron. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the Tzomet faction has joined the motion of no confidence in the government. All opposition factions' motions will be debated on 14 March.

Hebron Settlers Declare 'Non-Violent Civil Uprising'

TA0603151494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 6 Mar 94

[Text] The spokesman for the Jewish settlers in Hebron and activists of various right-wing organizations have declared a non-violent civil uprising in the wake of reports that most cabinet ministers support the evacuation of Jews from Hebron. According to our correspondent Gil Litman, they announced the upgrading of their opposition to the government's actions to the level of a civil uprising, which will be manifested in passive resistance to evacuation and other orders.

Arab MK Darawshah on Peace Talks, Syria Visit

JN0603184094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 6 Mar 94

[Text] A delegation of Israeli Arabs, led by Knesset Member [MK] 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah, arrived in Cairo today en route to Damascus to extend sympathies to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad over the death of his son Basil. The delegation met with Dr. Usamah al-Baz, President Mubarak's political adviser. On the line from Cairo is Qaysar Kabaha, who is accompanying the delegation on the visit:

[Begin recording] [Kabaha] The 57-strong delegation arrived in Cairo at noon today and is expected to proceed to Syria tomorrow morning to extend condolences to the Syrian president. The team was accorded an official welcome at Cairo International Airport. They received special laissez-passers valid for one trip to Syria. Knesset members 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah and Talab al-Sani' of the Arab Democratic Party this afternoon met with Mr. al-Baz. Darawshah had this to say about the session:

[Darawshah] Al-Baz sounded upbeat about the possibility of a resumption of the PLO-Israeli negotiations. He admitted there are real difficulties, but hoped the UN Security Council would pass a resolution that would convince the PLO to return to the negotiating table. Al-Baz noted, however, that the Israeli Government should meet two central demands—international protection for the Palestinians in the occupied territories and deterrent action against any future settler attacks on the Palestinians. He further emphasized that Egypt is engaged in an effort to end Israeli-PLO disagreements and relaunch the talks.

[Kabaha] Did the prospect of Tzomet joining the Israeli Government coalition and the potential results of such a step on the Israeli political landscape come up in your meeting with al-Baz?

[Darawshah] He did not conceal his apprehension, and could not see why Rabin wants to have Tzomet in the government. Al-Baz said that, in its present lineup and given the comfortable majority it commands, the Israeli Government is in a position to pursue the peace process. Al-Baz speculated that Rabin was likely out to influence certain Israelis and Arabs. He sounded really worried about the possible changes in Israel's political landscape.

[Kabaha] About tomorrow's visit to Syria by the Israeli Arab delegation, al-Baz said Egypt attaches high importance to the trip. In his recent meetings with al-Asad and Syrian officials, al-Baz said he got the impression they were looking forward to peace and that peace for Syria was now a strategic option. [end recording]

Policeman Wounded by Shots Near Gaza Strip

TA0703082194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 7 Mar 94

[Text] Shots were fired at a police car this morning near the Kisufim checkpoint at the entrance to the Gaza Strip. Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that one of the policemen was slightly wounded by glass splinters and received medical treatment on the spot.

Our correspondent reports that a police car on the way to the Kisufim checkpoint spotted a suspicious-looking car driving out of an orchard. When the policemen ordered the driver to stop, he opened fire at them from an automatic weapon. The policemen fired back, shattering the car's back window, but it sped off toward Khan Yunus. Army and police forces are now searching the area.

Two Killed in Hebron; Unrest Reported in Gaza Strip

TA0703175694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 7 Mar 94

[Text] Two Arab residents of Hebron have been shot and killed by Army fire. The incident occurred when a Border Police patrol was stoned, and troops opened fire at stone throwers. One person was killed and the second fatally wounded. Attempts by an Army doctor to save his life failed. Hospital officials in Hebron named the victims as 25-year-old Samir Duwayq, and 22-year-old Wahil al-Natshah.

There was also unrest in the Gaza Strip today. An Associated Press photographer was lightly wounded by a rubber bullet when soldiers dispersed a riot in the Jabalyah refugee camp. Also in Jabalyah, an Israeli Army patrol caught 22-year-old 'Amr Ahmad Matar, who is suspected of killing 80-year-old Morris Eisenstadt on the day of the Hebron massacre.

In Bani-Suhaylah, the car of two terrorists who attacked a police jeep and slightly wounded a soldier and policeman has been found. It was burned out and contained many blood stains and bullet holes.

King Arrives in Jeddah, Performs Minor Pilgrimage

JN0803212394 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Excerpts] His Majesty King Husayn performed the minor pilgrimage this evening. [passage omitted]

His Majesty King Husayn has arrived with God's blessing and care in Jeddah. He was received by His Highness Prince Sa'ud Bin-'Abd-al-Muhsin, the Jordanian charge d'affaires in Jeddah, and a number of top Saudi officials. [passage omitted]

King, Delegation Return Home

JN0903063994 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 9 Mar 94

[Excerpt] With God's care and blessings, His Majesty King Husayn returned home at dawn today after performing the minor pilgrimage on the blessed al-Qadr night [the night on which the Koran was revealed] in Mecca. He also visited the tomb of his great grandfather Prophet Muhammad, God's peace and blessings be upon him, in Medina. [passage omitted]

Paper Uncovers 'Terrorist Scheme' at Kindergarten

JN0803201794 Amman AL-BILAD in Arabic 9 Mar 94 p 4

["Exclusive" report]

[Text] Over 470 children at al-Faruq Islamic kindergarten in al-Qasr town, al-Karak Governorate, did not know that they were at the mercy of huge amounts of explosives, bombs, and ammunition hidden in their kindergarten. Children were terrified to learn that two people were arrested the Sunday before last [27 February] for hiding explosives in the kindergarten's kitchen. Parents were also terrified to learn that their innocent children could have been killed at any moment.

Al-BILAD has learned that last Sunday [as published], the security agencies apprehended 'Abd-al-Majid M. and 'Imad S. [not further identified] less than an hour after the two hid large quantities of machine guns, weapons, and ammunition in al-Faruq Islamic kindergarten. The kindergarten is affiliated with the Islamic Center Society, which, as is well known, is controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood group.

Eyewitnesses told AL-BILAD, which rushed to investigate the story in al-Qasr, that 'Abd-al-Majid M. is considered the shaykh of the returnees from Afghanistan. He was arrested before for involvement in the Muhammad Army case, but was later released.

The second suspect, 'Imad S. was working as an imam at the mosque adjacent to the kindergarten and lived in a house within the mosque building. He was also working at an Education Ministry school in al-Yarut town. He is married to a woman who teaches at al-Faruq kindergarten, where the explosives were hidden.

According to information made available to AL-BILAD, 'Abd-al-Majid M. brought the explosives in a car from Amman. He then asked 'Imad S. to hide them in his house. However, the latter suggested that they be placed in the mosque. The explosives were then moved to a communal kitchen used by the imam. The kitchen is part of the adjacent kindergarten.

Apparently, the car that brought the explosives from Amman was under close watch by security agencies. After the explosives were hidden, the security agencies, which were closely monitoring the operation, hurried to arrest 'Abd-al-Majid M. and then the imam, 'Imad S., only minutes before the call to the evening prayer in al-Yarut village, near al-Qasr.

From its investigation into the case, AL-BILAD was shocked to find out that the operation was part of a new terrorist scheme the "Jordanian Afghans" [term used to refer to Jordanian Muslim militants who fought in Afghanistan] were planning to execute outside Amman.

Informed sources told AL-BILAD that the scheme involves moving the bombing operations from Amman to the governorates and districts since the security agencies have gained full control over such operations inside Amman. The scheme involves concealing the explosives at mosques and kindergartens that are controlled by the Islamists.

According to well-informed sources, the primary objective of the scheme is the assassination of a General Intelligence officer and the bombing of shops selling alcoholic drinks in the various governorates, particularly al-Karak, as part of a large-scale scheme aimed at disturbing Jordan's domestic security and terrorizing and intimidating citizens.

Within this context, AL-BILAD learned that the security agencies have uncovered large quantities of ammunition, machine guns, and bombs in many mosques in various parts of the kingdom, including 'Ubadah Bin-Bishr mosque in al-Subayhi, where dynamite sticks were found.

Information leaked to AL-BILAD confirm that an Arab state is involved in supporting the Jordanian Afghans group in these operations. It has been proven that contacts were held between the [Jordanian] Afghans and other Afghan parties supported by the same state.

The final number of the "Afghans" arrested thus far in the bombing cases stands at around 40. According to informed sources, the accused will be brought to trial in the next few days.

AL-BILAD toured al-Qasr town as soon as the weapons cache was discovered in al-Faruq Islamic kindergarten and obtained detailed information from the residents of the area and informed sources on the kindergarten

operation, which is considered, as we have said, one of the major operations planned by the Jordanian Afghans.

The first observation one can make at the kindergarten is that the kindergarten, affiliated with the Islamic Center Society, has more than 470 children. The weapons were hidden less than one meter away from a kindergarten class full of children. This means that these children could have been killed at any time if there was any mistake in the transportation of these explosives. Eyewitnesses also said that none of the townspeople expected the imam of the mosque adjacent to the kindergarten to be involved in such acts. This means that the scheme was thoroughly planned.

AL-BILAD also learned that the mosque where the imam worked was built at the expense of al-Faruq Islamic kindergarten, which is affiliated with the Islamic Center Society controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood.

Residents of the area have not observed any strong connection between the first and second suspects to suggest any suspicions of an organizational link between them.

In a related development, AL-BILAD has learned that other people suspected of affiliation with the Jordanian Afghans were arrested in al-Rabbah area. No information or specific figures are available yet on those arrested.

In previous issues AL-BILAD published exclusive reports on a plan involving bombings in Amman. It also published reports on the secret files of the Jordanian Afghans, as well as those arrested in these cases.

It is worth noting that the Muslim Brotherhood group has not yet reacted to reports on the hiding of weapons in a kindergarten that they control. Residents of the area say they think the suspects belong to the Muslim Brotherhood group.

Firm Action Urged Against Attacks on Foreigners

JN0503082094 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 5 Mar 94 pp 36, 28

["Last Station" column by Salih al-Qallab: "Follow the Example of the Occupied Territory"]

[Text] The phenomenon of attacking foreign tourists in the wake of every massacre or problem in the occupied territory should be fully condemned by all forces and citizens. This phenomenon should be dealt with firmly and decisively by the security agencies. The reason for this is that any person who takes revenge for what happened at the Ibrahimi Mosque by stabbing a foreign tourist is harming an innocent human being and rendering a service to Israel and Zionist gangs.

If those who carry out such attacks knew the extent of sympathy the Hebron massacre has evoked in the United States, and even Japan, they would definitely feel guilty and come to the conclusion that they have unwittingly rendered a service to our enemies. When an ordinary citizen in Europe and the United States hears that a foreign tourist was stabbed in an Amman street, or in any other Arab country, he will be more responsive to Zionist propaganda portraying us as killers and terrorists.

It is not true that every Westerner is our enemy and Israel's friend. World public opinion has shifted greatly in favor of our cause. The intifadah in the occupied territory has opened the eyes of Westerners to the reality of matters in our region. European and U.S. citizens are now aware that Zionist propaganda is misleading and that Israel is a racist, suppressive state.

It is totally unacceptable that foreigners and tourists in our country should be targets for spontaneous, emotional reactions whenever Israel commits a massacre in Palestine. We should launch a media campaign using television, radio, and the press to warn against these odious actions that harm our cause and substantiate Zionist propaganda against us in Western nations.

Those who regard an attack on an innocent tourist—whose true feelings and sympathies are known only to God—as a heroic act should follow the example of the occupied territory. No foreign tourist has ever been attacked in the West Bank and Gaza, even when clashes and confrontations are raging, save what happens by mistake. This is why the presence of foreign journalists and tourists has been utilized in the interest of the struggling Palestinian people and against Israel and the Israeli troops.

The Ibrahimi Mosque massacre has elicited sorrow and sadness not just from those who attacked foreign tourists and others they thought were foreign tourists; all our people were deeply moved and were in tears over this massacre. However, they expressed their sadness and sorrow by staging demonstrations, making donations, or praying for the mercy of the martyrs. They did not resort to unacceptable reactions, as did those who attacked our foreign guests.

Deputy Criticizes U.S. Ambassador's Activities

NC0803140594 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Excerpts] The Chamber of Deputies held a plenary session today. [passage omitted]

Deputy 'Ali 'Ammar assailed the U.S. ambassador's interference in Lebanon's internal affairs. He said: Before the two massacres were committed [Hebron killings and Lebanese church explosion], it was expected that something would happen in Lebanon, as shown by the U.S. ambassador's statements. The ambassador's interference goes beyond all international norms and constitutes intervention in Lebanese internal affairs like between a victim and a murderer. He also provokes certain agents and symbols to foment sedition. Deputy 'Ammar added: It is time that the pertinent authorities stopped responding to the U.S. intentions that seek to cause sedition among the Lebanese people.

He asked the Chamber of Deputies to adopt a stand denouncing the U.S. envoy's behavior. [passage omitted]

[Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic at 1235 GMT on 8 March adds: "Deputy 'Ali 'Ammar called U.S. Ambassador Mark Hambley the ambassador of filth [safir al-danas]. He described his movements as suspicious and as going beyond diplomatic limits. He said that the ambassador equates victims and criminals."]

Hizballah Reportedly Using New Tactics, Arms

NC0903073794 Paris AFP in English 0509 GMT 9 Mar 94

[By Hala Boncompagni]

[Text] Beirut, March 9 (AFP)—New tactics and weapons are the secret to the Iranian-backed Hizballah's success in inflicting heavier losses on Israeli and allied militiamen in south Lebanon while suffering fewer casualties.

A month after killing four Israeli soldiers and wounding five, Hizballah guerrillas on Monday [7 March] launched a series of bomb attacks on the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA), killing 10 militiamen and wounding 12.

A senior intelligence officer was among those killed, but Hizballah reported no casualties on its side.

"Monday's operations were specifically aimed at eliminating Israel's main intelligence agents," Shaykh Nabil Qawuq who is among those in charge of Hizballah operations in south Lebanon, told AFP on Tuesday.

"They are part of a series of operations to sow chaos among SLA ranks," he said, adding that more than 100 SLA militiamen had deserted over the past year.

Military experts and sources close to the Shiite Moslem fundamentalists said Hizballah's operations in recent months were more professional and homed in on specific Israeli or SLA targets to avoid retaliation against civilians.

The guerrillas were also using more sophisticated weapons.

Their arsenal now includes Russian-made Sagger anti-tank rockets known for their precision, which are increasingly being used against moving targets, a western military source said.

Hizballah has had "very good results" with the rockets, said the source, who declined to be named.

An SLA official said that Hizballah guerrillas were also using a new type of roadside bomb that "is shaped like rocks and painted in earthy colours."

He said the bombs were Iranian-made or upgraded by Iran and that they were capable of jamming Israeli radars. Hizballah also uses Katyusha rockets and mortars.

Sources close to the fundamentalists have said the new tactics evolved two months ago with the arrival in Lebanon of a new team of Iranian Revolutionary Guards to oversee and coordinate the anti- Israeli operations.

They include a new head for the Revolutionary Guards and an Iranian official known by his first name only, 'Abbas, who is said to be in charge of Hizballah's military operations, the sources said.

Around 200 Revolutionary Guards, clerics and social workers are based in Lebanon's eastern al-Biqa' Valley, where they were first deployed following Israel's 1982 invasion.

Hizballah has meanwhile transferred its military positions out of the al-Biqa' city of Ba'labakk to areas closer to the border with Syria and switched its activities in the region to social work and construction.

Fundamentalist sources said these steps were part of a campaign by Hizballah to improve its domestic image after winning eight parliamentary seats in the 1992 elections.

"They are also focusing more and more on helping their supporters to set up private businesses as part of an effort to forge a new image for the movement," a reliable source said.

"Hizballah has become more diplomatic since the 1992 elections. They no longer terrorize people," the source added.

Hizballah leader Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah said last month his organisation was "not only a military movement. We have popular roots everywhere."

'Second Day' of Arab Israelis' Visit Reported

JN0803192394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Report by radio correspondents Qaysar Kabahah and Muhammad Sharif "from Damascus"—recorded]

[Text] [Kabahah] The delegation of Arab Israeli citizens started its second day in Syria with a visit to new al-Qunaytirah and old al-Qunaytirah, which was destroyed by the Israeli Defense Forces during the Yom Kippur War. A large crowd of the city's notables, headed by al-Qunaytirah Governor Dr. Walid al-Buz, received the delegation.

The governor welcomed the delegation at the main reception hall in the Governorate Building. He reviewed the geographic and living conditions in the two parts of the Golan Heights [the Syrian and Israeli-controlled parts]. He also talked about the concept of peace from the Syrian viewpoint.

[Al-Qunaytirah Governor Walid al-Buz] Syria is working for the sake of a just and comprehensive peace. The banners for that kind of peace have been raised by the president on several occasions. The president has declared that kind of peace as a stated policy for Syria and for all the Arabs; the just and comprehensive peace on all Arab fronts; the peace that would restore rights and return the land; the peace of the brave; the peace of the knights; the peace that will give each what is rightfully his; the peace that can survive and last; the peace that will guarantee the interests of all within the framework of international legitimacy and the relevant UN resolutions, particularly UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

[Kabahah] 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah, Knesset member and head of the delegation, delivered a speech thanking the hosts for their hospitality and said that peace can only be achieved by ending the occupation of all Arab territories occupied in 1967 and by recognizing the legitimate rights of peoples in the region. He also said the desired peace is the peace of the brave, as His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad has said.

[Darawshah] ...the brave that guarantees the recognition of rights for all peoples.

[Kabahah] The delegation toured neighborhoods in the destroyed city. The head of delegation, Darawshah, and Knesset member al-Sani' planted a tree at the al-Qunaytirah World Visitors Garden on behalf of the delegation. My colleague Muhammad Sharif is joining me now and he will talk about the Syrian media's focus on the delegation's visit.

[Sharif] In fact, the delegation has drawn much of the attention of the media, including the radio, television, and local and foreign newspapers here in Syria. Journalists are accompanying and following the delegation members everywhere. The attention they have been given has been prominent on the Syrian radio and television. The news of the delegation, as well as the interviews with Knesset Member 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah, the head of delegation, and Knesset Member Talab al-Sani', have occupied a prominent position in the newscasts. The journalists also took interest in their fellow journalists and conducted interviews with them. They were keen to ask questions about Israeli politics and party affairs.

Papers issued here today highlighted the delegation's visit on their front pages and published pictures of the delegation members. Papers also highlighted the celebrations marking the 8 March Revolution, which brought the Ba'th Party to power in Syrian 33 years ago. They also highlighted the speech President Hafiz al-Asad made last night. This was the first speech to be made by the president since the death of his son, Basil.

Members of the delegation are being received warmly everywhere by the Syrian citizens, who are fully aware of the delegation's visit and who are following with interest the delegation's visits, activities, and meetings.

The meetings between some of the delegation members and their relatives or people from their hometowns who live in Damascus, for the first time in over 40 years, were really touching. Many Palestinians have flocked to the hotel to inquire about their relatives and kinsfolk in their hometowns.

[Kabahah] Tomorrow, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad is expected to meet with the delegation members, who will offer condolences on the death of his son, Basil. Other meetings are expected to be held with other public figures in Syria.

Muhammad Sharif and Qaysar Kabahah from Damascus.

Delegation Leader's Remarks Reported

JN0903075994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] The delegation of the 1948 Palestinians [Arabs who remained in Palestine following the creation of Israel in 1948] led by 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah, accompanied by Khalid al-Fahum, leader of the Palestinian National Salvation Front, visited the liberated city of al-Qunaytirah this morning. The delegation saw the remains of the savage destruction wrought by the Israeli occupation forces before the heroic town was liberated.

The al-Qunaytirah governor briefed the delegation on the sacrifices made by the people of the governorate and the Syrian Arab people to defend the homeland, the Palestinian cause, and the Arab nation's causes. The governor said: Syria is working to realize the just and comprehensive peace expounded by President Hafiz al-Asad—the peace of the brave. This will restore occupied Arab territories and return rights to their owners,

based on UN resolutions. The governor also presented Mr. Darawshah with the shield of liberated al-Qunaytirah.

Replying to the governor's speech, Darawshah said: We are pleased to arrive in this governorate, which is a dear part of Syria and the Arab nation. We look forward to the bright future when this part will be merged with the other side of the occupied Golan, which will have to be liberated and returned to Syria and the Arab nation.

Darawshah conveyed the love of our people in occupied Palestine and the Golan to the sons of the Syrian Arab people and the wise leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad.

Darawshah said: We bow our heads and pay homage to the Syrian people's sacrifices and martyrs for the sake of Palestine and the Arab nation.

Concluding his speech, Darawshah said: Victory will inevitably be realized. Occupied Golan will return to Syria. This is the peace we understand, a peace that restores rights their owners and ends Israel's occupation of all occupied Arab territories. This is the cherished peace as described by President Hafiz al-Asad, the peace of the brave.

In a statement to the SANA correspondent, Darawshah said: The destruction we have seen demonstrates the savagery of the occupation. This is a deplorable crime by the occupation against al-Qunaytirah. Other acts of aggression and savage practices have been carried out in other parts of Arab countries, especially inside Palestine. Hundreds of villages were destroyed. Thus, the Israeli occupation has added other crimes to its series of criminal actions.

Darawshah called for Israel's withdrawal from occupied Golan and for its return to its Syrian owners so Syrians, under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, can rebuild al-Qunaytirah, return its inhabitants, who were driven out, and so it will return to its Syrian mother.

Darawshah and his delegation visited the martyrs cemetery, placed a wreath on the martyr's monument, and read prayers for the martyrs' chaste souls. He wrote an article in the visitors' book in which he praised the heroic struggle of the Syrian Armed Forces supported by the heroic Syrian people in defense of Arab territory. Darawshah said: We are certain the darkness of the occupation will end and the Israeli occupation will leave occupied Syrian Golan and all occupied Arab territories.

Speech Rally Marks March Revolution Anniversary

JN0803123994

[Editorial Report] Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Television Network in Arabic, in a linkup with Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic, at 0902 GMT on 8 March begins a live transmission from the Damascus University Auditorium of a speech rally on the 31st anniversary of Syria's 8 March revolution.

At 0905 GMT, ranking Syrian officials enter the hall, led by 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP] and President Hafiz al-Asad's representative, accompanied by other officials, including Vice Presidents 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah; Sulayman Qaddah, ASBP regional secretary; People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, and Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi. Other ministers and officials are also seated near the podium.

The rally begins with the observance of one minute of silence in memory of President al-Asad's late son, Basil, and the Arab martyrs. This is followed immediately by the Ba'th anthem.

The first to address the rally is Ahmad Abu-Musa, head of the Ba'th Vanguards Organization, on behalf of popular organizations and professional unions. Abu-Musa begins his speech by euloging Basil al-Asad and his traits, praising President Hafiz al-Asad's patience and forbearance. He says the sympathy with Syria that Arabs have shown illustrates the unity of the Arab nation. He reviews Syria's political, economic, social, and democratic accomplishments under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad. He adds that the 8 March revolution was the major turning point in the history of Syria, which turned from a small state to a leading country able to influence Arab and world relations. He adds that Syria's credibility has been enhanced by the Geneva summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton, noting that Syria's stand on the peace process is based on adherence to Arab rights and international legitimacy and respect for UN resolutions. He concludes by saying that Syria's stability, national unity, and democratic practice have been enhanced by popular organizations.

At 0927 GMT, Safwan Qudsi, member of the Progressive National Front [NPF] Central Command and secretary general of the Arab Socialist Union Party, delivers a speech on behalf of the NPF. He begins his speech by stressing the importance of historical memory, which, he says, shows that Syria has taken large strides since the 8 March revolution. He says that under President Hafiz al-Asad, new realities have been created, noting that Syria before Hafiz al-Asad was not the same as Syria with al-Asad. He explains that President al-Asad is a historic leader who managed to initiate conspicuous changes in the life of Syria. He notes the launching of the al- Asad-led Corrective Movement in 1971 has proved the ability of the 8 March revolution to rectify its own course and to rid itself of ideological rigidity. He notes that this would not have been possible if the 8 March revolution had not had a special mechanism that allows it to develop itself and to respond to challenges and changes. He lavishly praises what he terms President Hafiz al-Asad's genius, profound understanding of

reality, and farsightedness. Turning to Syria's participation in the Middle East peace process, he says Syria has shown a readiness for political flexibility, but not at the expense of basic constants.

At 0957 GMT, 'Abdallah al-Ahmar delivers a speech on behalf of the ASBP. After conveying the congratulations of President Hafiz al-Asad and the ASBP command, al-Ahmar salutes the souls of the martyrs of the ASBP and Arab nation and greets the Syrian Armed Forces. He then eulogizes Basil al-Asad, noting that his loss has shown the Syrian people's rallying around the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, love for the deceased, and strong national unity. He adds that this "ordeal" has also proven the strong ties between Syria and Lebanon.

He then reviews al-Asad's role in the ASBP's struggle since its establishment, noting that thanks to President al-Asad's leadership, the 8 March revolution managed to tackle all shortcomings in view of his understanding of reality. He says the revolution after the Corrective Movement has realized achievements everywhere in Syria. He also notes that the revolution has stressed the importance of building the individual through the spread of education, remarking that the revolution has guaranteed education as one of the citizens' basic rights. He says that under the Corrective Movement, party pluralism was introduced, represented by the establishment in 1972 of the NPF, which groups a number of parties in Syria, including the Ba'th Party.

Turning to the country's economic performance, he says that "satisfactory" growth rates were achieved in 1993. He notes the growth rates of various sectors of the economy.

He says Arab unity is a basic ASBP objective. The objective of Arab unity, he says, guides the ASBP in all its efforts. He says that since the Corrective Movement, President al-Asad has been calling for Arab solidarity.

Turning to the Middle East peace process, al-Ahmar says this process is aimed at achieving a just, comprehensive peace. He notes that Syria joined this process on the basis of this understanding. He notes that Syria adheres to the Madrid formula. Since the Madrid conference, he says, Israel has been been trying to hamper the peace process. He adds that Syria has confronted Israel's attempts to isolate Syria, and worked to enhance coordination among Arab parties to the peace process, especially with Lebanon. He says Syria's efforts to confront Israel's "maneuvers" were crowned by the Geneva summit, which emphasized the principles of the solution and the Madrid formula. He stresses that Syria will not relinquish one inch of the Golan or other occupied Arab territories.

At 1045 GMT, al-Ahmar turns to the international scene, noting that the world will not stabilize unless racism, double standards, and aggressive tendencies are removed.

Al-Ahmar concludes his speech at 1050 GMT. Immediately afterward, the speech rally concludes with the Syrian national anthem. Live transmission ends at 1052 GMT.

Al-Ahmar Address at Rally Reported

JN0803145194 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 0957 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Speech by 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and President Hafiz al-Asad's representative, at a speech rally marking the 31st anniversary of the 8 March revolution in Damascus—live]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] On this glorious occasion, the 31st anniversary of the 8 March revolution, I am honored and pleased to represent the secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP], struggler President Hafiz al-Asad [applause], and to congratulate you and all our struggling Arab nation's masses. I am honored to convey to you and through you to all strugglers of our great party and all Arab strugglers wherever they are, the congratulations of the leader of the victorious march of party and people, comrade struggler President Hafiz al-Asad [applause], secretary general of the ASBP and president of the Syrian Arab Republic. I also convey his greetings and wishes for further success in our steady militant march toward the achievement of the objectives of the party and masses, represented by unity, freedom, and socialism [applause]. I also convey to you the congratulations of the command of our great party, the initiator and leader of the revolution, and its greetings and warm wishes on this cherished occasion. [passage omitted]

A simple comparison between Syria now and Syria before the revolution provides clear evidence of the great miracle that the revolution has achieved after the Corrective Movement and under the leadership and guidance of great leader Hafiz al-Asad [applause]. Achievements surround us everywhere we look, and they are constantly increasing, complementing each other in quality and quantity. These achievements speak for themselves, and show that the Syria of the revolution, the Syria of al-Asad, is no longer a backward, marginal country, but a modern state and a society that is firmly proceeding toward further progress and prosperity. [passage omitted]

All this has established a solid basis for political stability and security that is considered an exception in a tense region and a turbulent world that has recently been shaken by major events. This stability has contributed to the consolidation of a major, ambitious development process within the framework of a multi-sector economic system based on cooperation and participation within the state's plan. This plan is aimed at ensuring the country's progress and advancement within the instructions of the ASBP to build a new society. It will be a

society based on equality and the eradication of exploitation, poverty, illiteracy, and diseases by improving the people's living standards and by increasing the state's capabilities on the basis of self-reliance. In this brief address, we cannot cover all of last year's indications of growth. However, we will run through some of them to show the continuity of the battle for an advanced society. Comrades, we notice that in less than one year the production and distribution of electricity has stabilized. This has been a great qualitative success that could not have been realized had it not been for the direct instructions of the leader of the homeland, comrade struggler President Hafiz al-Asad [applause]. Last year's economic growth rates registered satisfactory figures and showed steady development in qualitative and quantitative progress.

If we take the gross national production [GNP] as the most comprehensive indication, we find that in comparison with 1992, the GNP grew at a rate of 17.5 percent in 1993 in current prices. This growth rate becomes 10 percent if it is measured with fixed prices. This is a high and satisfactory rate. In the same context, all sectors have registered good growth rates. The agricultural sector has registered a growth rate of 17 percent, which signifies the importance of the revolution's strategy promoting the agricultural sector through enhancing the process of building the infrastructure of this sector and applying appropriate pricing policies that do justice to the human effort and encourage production.

As for the mineral and manufacturing industries sector, a growth rate of 4 percent has been registered. The service sector registered a growth rate of 22 percent. This helps raise citizens' living standards through the various general services that are offered to them for free. Among the very positive phenomena that has been noted has been the rise in total investment capital by approximately 9 percent. This capital's contribution to the GNP has risen from 7 percent, versus 93 percent of the final consumption, in 1992 to 13 percent, versus 87 percent of the final consumption, in 1993. In view of the measures that have been taken to boost economic plurality, promote individual initiatives, and encourage citizens to invest their funds in economic activities, total private capital has risen from 57 billion Syrian pounds in 1992 to 86 billion Syrian pounds in 1993. Perhaps what was most conspicuous last year was the increase in goods production, which constitutes a source of market value in the economy. Improvements in the mechanisms and volume of economic trade with the world have taken place. Positive qualitative developments have taken place through the codification of economic cooperation with some sisterly countries, such as Lebanon, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Stable and developed formulas for this cooperation have been agreed upon. This cooperation falls within the framework of a comprehensive economic Arab integration, which is in the interest of all Arabs.

But, the major changes and achievements under the revolution in all sectors and throughout Syria and its governorates do not constitute the final picture of what we plan to achieve. Nor do they represent all our aspirations. Rather, they are steps along the road ahead of us within the limits of available resources. They provide an incentive for continuing the process of work and construction to arrive at our final goals. The past few years have not been void of difficulties. Throughout the years of the revolution, we have faced difficulties and obstacles of various types. We have managed to overcome many of them, and we will overcome all difficulties that will face us in the future. We are optimistic and hopeful. We are determined and resolved to continue the march until we arrive at our pan-Arab objectives and defeat all the obstacles along this road.

Comrades, brother citizens: The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party believes that the Arabs have no existence outside their pan-Arab entity. It is a pan-Arab party in ideology, practice, and organization. This is why it has put unity at the head of its objectives and given it first priority, considering it the most sublime objective of the contemporary struggle and the common denominator of all Arabs. All the events and developments on the pan-Arab and world level prove that the Arabs will never be able to play their role in full in the march of world civilization unless they are able to achieve comprehensive unity. Unity is one of their rights as a nation. It is also their duty as messengers of a humanitarian civilization that has lit the darkness of history at several stages.

Comrades, the March Revolution took the objective of unity as a model that guides all its actions in the pan-Arab arena. Since the Corrective Movement, the hero of the Corrective Movement, leader struggler President Hafiz al-Asad [applause] has been exerting every effort to urge the Arabs to close their ranks and to entrench their solidarity, even at its minimum level, especially since Arab solidarity reduces the possibility for pan-Arab tragedies such as the Iraq-Iran war, the Iraqi regime's occupation of Kuwait, and other tragedies and crises. Solidarity enables the Arabs to achieve their transitional objectives, liberate their land, restore their rights, and reinforce their position in the world. Arab solidarity also creates a positive atmosphere that paves the way for the promotion of comprehensive cooperation among Arabs, that allows them to make large strides toward their comprehensive unity, and that allows the establishment of unity between two or more of the Arab states that are ready to do so.

The Yemeni unity experiment has delighted the Arabs who aspire for unity. However, the difficulties and crises that have recently afflicted this unity have created a wave of frustration and pain for the sons of the Yemeni people and for all Arabs. They have all called on the Yemeni leadership to work to overcome the current crisis, reactivate joint institutions, entrench democracy, and to meet the people's demands to safeguard unity and bolster its march. [passage omitted]

O comrades; O brothers; O masses of our militant nation: Since its inception, the Ba'th Party has been known as Palestine's party. Likewise, since its inception,

the revolution has viewed the Arab-Zionist conflict as a top priority, given that it is the paramount issue concerning all Arabs, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arabian Gulf. Syria has been making dear sacrifices and spending a great deal of its revenue to confront the continuous Israeli aggression, defend the Arabs' pan-Arab rights, and liberate their occupied territories. It is working with all fraternal Arabs to mobilize their potential and unify their positions to settle the conflict in a manner that will ensure the restoration of Arab territories and rights, and that will also result in a just and comprehensive peace in the region—a decent and honorable peace that will be enjoyed by all, and that will allow the countries and peoples of the region to live free from aggressions, expansionist policies, and domination.

Thanks to this pan-Arab understanding of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Syria's pan-Arab role has grown immensely. Syria now speaks on behalf of all Arabs. As for its leader, struggler President Hafiz al-Asad, [applause] he is meeting the leaders of the big powers on behalf of all Arabs. Likewise, they hold talks with him in this capacity. This confirms that Syria's pan-Arab role now enjoys the recognition of everyone in the region and the world at large.

The peace process was unleashed more than two years ago to serve as a vehicle to achieve a clear objective, namely, a comprehensive and just peace that will return the territories and rights to their Arab owners and consecrate security and stability in the region. Syria has taken part in this process on the basis of this formula. Syria's participation was instrumental in paving the way for the peace process. Under no circumstances will Syria accept any distortion of the Madrid formula, or any deviation from this formula. This is because it is impossible to achieve peace unless it is based on the essence, foundations, principles, and objectives of this process, which constitute an embodiment of international legitimacy. The honoring of the essence, foundations, principles, and objectives of this process must result in the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy.

Since the convocation of the Madrid conference, Israel, which was compelled to enter the peace process in the first place, has used various means to obstruct this process. That is why it decided to torpedo it from within. It has made several attempts to achieve this objective. It started with procrastination, with a failure to discuss substantive issues, and with an attempt to render the Washington talks devoid of any meaningful content to turn them into a marginal and insignificant parley in the hope that it will buy time to promote its expansionist objectives.

Faced with these attempts, Syria has underlined its adherence to the principles and bases of the peace process. Similarly, it has underscored coordination with the Arab sides, given that this coordination is conducive to Arab strength and cohesion. This time, Israel sought to strike at inter-Arab coordination and weaken the Arab sides by dealing with them one at a time and offering them fragile, separate, and partial solutions, which are designed to achieve Israel's expansionist ambitions, circumvent the bases of the peace process, and wriggle out of its obligations as enshrined in the relevant international resolutions, as the course of events has shown.

Nonetheless, Syria has confronted Israel's attempts to deal with the Arab sides one at a time and isolate Syria in preparation for nullifying its pioneering pan-Arab role in the peace process. It is true that Israel has managed to conclude a unilateral deal with the Palestinians. However, Syria has striven to enhance coordination with the Arab parties to the Washington talks, particularly fraternal Lebanon, because coordination and joint action are necessary if the Arabs are to regain their rights.

Syria's efforts in confronting the Israeli maneuvers were crowned with great success. This was clearly manifested in the Geneva summit between struggler President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Clinton. Observers were unanimous in describing this summit as the most important event in both the Middle East and the international arenas, saying it was a summit between the leader of a great nation, the Arab nation, and the leader of the most powerful state in the world. It was the summit between equals and the summit that restated Arab rights and Arab constants. The summit effectively reconfirmed that the solution, a just and comprehensive peace, must be based on the Madrid formula and the implementation of international legitimacy resolutions 242, 338, and 425. In Geneva, President al-Asad said: I do not differentiate between the Golan and southern Lebanon, between what is occupied from Palestine or Jordan. When I ask for one part I ask for the whole. This is elementary because, to me, they all constitute the same Arab land.

Within this pan-Arab concept lies the secret of the success of his Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and the failure of separate solutions to settle the conflict. Faced with this success scored by Syria's pan-Arab policy, Israel found itself cornered and unable to maneuver. That's why it carried out a concentrated media campaign before and after the Geneva summit to minimize the importance of this summit and to try to marginalize its results. It did so in an attempt to obstruct the peace process and hamper the U.S. role, which moved, though a bit late, to push the peace process ahead and render it a success after the Geneva summit. After the failure of all these attempts, Israel returned to its aggressive nature. It escalated its systematic terrorist operations, starting with the escalation of its operations in southern Lebanon. It then perpetrated its odious crime in the blessed Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, a crime that is unequaled in atrocity, ugliness, and the flouting of human values and international laws and norms.

This crime brings back to mind the picture of Israeli terrorism in all its vilest forms, particularly since Israel's stamp appeared in another terrorist crime, the explosion at the Sayyidat al-Najah in Beirut, simply to divert the

world's attention from the Ibrahimi mosque crime and to try to return Lebanon to a whirlpool of violence and internecine fighting.

The international reaction to these Israeli crimes has not gone beyond condemnation. In order to tackle these actions and confront Israel's scorn for human life, the condemnations and denunciations must be linked to specific deterring actions taken under the aegis of the United Nations and international law.

Comrades, we notice that the more the Israeli repression in the occupied territories intensifies, the more the heroic intifadah escalates, the more brave the heroic intifadah becomes, the more the Palestinian struggle in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip intensifies, and the more the steadfastness of the kinsfolk in the Golan and the resistance of our people in southern Lebanon increases.

Israel's odious crimes confirm that the settlement issue, which represents the direct and specific features of Israel's expansionism and aggression, stands as a basic and important obstacle in the face of the peace process. It also violates international laws and norms because it entails geographic and demographic changes in the occupied territories. Thus, it is imperative to tackle the issue of settlements and view it as a focal point of the peace process. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

Factional Clashes Continue in Kabul, Konduz

Heavy Fighting in Kabul

LD0803162594 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] The capital city of Afghanistan, Kabul, was today the arena of heavy fire exchange among the warring factions. The fire exchange killed or wounded dozens of people. Several rockets landed near a mosque in a north-western district of Kabul, where the food consignment dispatched by the UN was being distributed, killing at least six people and wounding 30 others.

At dawn this morning, the exchange of fire between the supporters of Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar and President Borhanoddin Rabbani, in the eastern and southern suburbs of Kabul, left several casualties.

Konduz Province Cleared of Dostam Militia

LD0803201994 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Konduz Province has been cleared of the existence of Dostam's infamous and corrupt militia. As a result of the heroic operation of the infidel-crushing fighters of Konduz Province and with the participation of mojahedin from the provinces of Takhar and Badakhshan, Konduz Province was cleared of the filth of Dostum-Babrak-Golboddin's militia by 1700 today.

The mojahedin operation, which started yesterday, continued its advance toward the city of Konduz from three directions: an operation from the direction of Khanabad and the asphalted road under the command of Qari Rahmatollah, from the direction of the airport under the command of Commander Amir Mohammad, and from the direction of Bala Hesar under the command of Mir Alam along with Commander 'Abdol, Commander Sher Mohammad, Commander Mirza Naseri, and with the cooperation of the mojahedin of the provinces of Takhar and Badakhshan. By 1700 today they achieved complete conquest of the airport of Konduz, the division [headquarters] of Bala Hesar, the city of Konduz, the district of Chardara, and Sher Khan Bandar. The operation ended successfully with the active and all-out cooperation of the people of Konduz, who had suffered enough of the oppression of Dostam's thieving and looting militia over the past few days, and with the cooperation of mojahedin and commanders of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party]. [passage indistinct]

Mas'ud Gains Against Uzbeks in Konduz

NC0803210594 Paris AFP in English 1934 GMT 8 Mar 94

[By Terence White]

[Text] Bagram, Afghanistan, March 8 (AFP)—Mojahedin forces loyal to the Afghan president have captured a strategic fort from Uzbek rivals in an attack on the northern capital Konduz, former defence minister Ahmed Shah Mas'ud said Tuesday [8 March].

"The state forces have seized the Konduz Bala Hesar (fort) and key points around the airport," the military strongman of president Borhanoddin Rabbani said in an interview.

Speaking at Bagram airbase, some 50 kilometres (30 miles) north of Kabul, a relaxed and confident Mas'ud said that the Uzbek militia of ex-communist General Abdul Rashid Dostam had pulled all their heavy weapons back from the Konduz airport under pressure from mojahedin fighters Tuesday.

He said before the state forces launched their offensive, armed locals in Konduz had already started to attack individuals of the Dostam militia because of the "Uzbek excesses" when they captured the city about a week ago.

"They committed every sin known to man," said Mas'ud, recounting rape, robbery, kidnapping and murder.

Mas'ud, who received continual radio updates on the fighting in Konduz, said more than 50 Uzbek troops had been killed and another 150 taken prisoner so far, while an unknown number of tanks had been captured. He gave no figures for casualties among pro-Rabbani forces.

With the aid of a hand-drawn sketch-map, Mas'ud took pains to describe how Dostam got the upper hand in the Konduz fighting earlier.

He said state mojahedin had repulsed Dostam's attacks successfully, confining the Uzbeks to the west of the Konduz River until Hezb-e-Eslami inside the city staged an internal uprising and attacked them from the rear, after which they were obliged to flee.

Afterwards, these same Hezb-e-Eslami faction guerrillas, who are loyal to Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, turned against Dostam when the Uzbeks tried to disarm them after Hezb protests about looting in the city.

Mas'ud said the only Hezb-e-Eslami fighters in Konduz still loyal to Dostam "are ethnic Turkomans who are based in the mountains to the west, and who are outsiders like Dostam's Uzbeks."

"In general the majority of Uzbeks in Konduz and Takhar provinces are loyal to the state, only the Turkomans side with Dostam," claimed Mas'ud.

Admitting that the neighbouring town of Khanabad, 25 kilometres to the east, had also been captured by joint Dostam-Hezb forces and occupied for two days, he said it was re-captured by his troops after three days.

He said advancing westwards from Khanabad, the pro-Rabbani mojahedin captured two key posts Monday—one on the road to Konduz and the other near the airbase.

"It wasn't the plan to attack the airbase. We didn't have a strong enough force but the enemy pulled back so fast our forces made a hot pursuit," Mas'ud explained.

Tuesday's successful capture of Bala Hesar, once the fortress of a 19th Century Uzbek ruler in Konduz, has cut Dostam off from his base at Sher Khan Bandar on the Amu Darya River, he said.

Furthermore, in an operation east of Sher Khan Bandar along this river, which forms the international boundary with the former Soviet Union, three commanders had cleaned up pockets of pro-Dostam Uzbek supporters who had "created problems for the local people," Mas'ud said.

"The border is now secure between Emam Sahib and Dasht-i-Archi," Mas'ud declared.

India

Minister: U.S. Statements Encourage 'Terrorism'

BK0903094994 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 9 Mar 94

[Text] New Delhi has told Washington that its recent statements on the situation in Kashmir tend to encourage Pakistan in abetting terrorism across the border. The minister of state for external affairs, Mr. R.L. Bhatia, said in the Rajya Sabha today that the references to Kashmir by responsible U.S. officials lack balance and proper perspective. Answering a spate of supplementaries on the reported shift in the U.S. policy, he said the government has taken due note of the fact and is dealing with it accordingly. We are protesting where it is necessary, he said. And Mr. Bhatia added that in diplomacy, there are many ways to explain one's point and convey resentment where it is called for. Mr. Bhatia said (?the government) has told the Clinton administration that Kashmir is an integral part of India, and we will not brook any interference in our internal affairs. Observing that there seems to be no finality in the U.S. position, the minister said New Delhi is having a continuous dialogue with Washington to make it understand our position. Mr. Bhatia pointed out that Indo-U.S. relations are multifaceted in nature, and despite differences on certain issues, there are numerous constructive and mutually beneficial aspects. Human rights, nuclear nonproliferation, and Kashmir are some of the issues on which there are differences of opinion. Asked about the forthcoming visit of the U.S. assistant secretary of state to New Delhi, Ms. Robin Raphel, he said whomsoever she meets she would be told categorically that her comments have damaged the Indo-Pak relations and encourage Pakistani militancy. Reiterating that there is no question of third country mediation on Kashmir, the minister said it is not a disputed territory. He agreed to table the documents exchanged between India and Pakistan at the recent foreign secretary-level talks. Replying to the main question, the minister said Islamabad's clandestine nuclear weapons program has been confirmed time and again. Mr. Bhatia made it clear that New Delhi neither has nor intends to acquire weapons of mass destruction. He said the real danger, therefore, is of nuclear adventurism on the part of Pakistan. The minister regretted that Washington has not done much to prevent Pakistan from acquiring and retaining weapons of mass destruction.

Prime Minister Reviews Ties With U.S., PRC

BK0803163494 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] The prime minister asserted in Parliament today that the export of terrorism by Pakistan to Kashmir will be put down and nothing can come in the way of protecting India's territorial integrity.

Replying to the debate in both houses of Parliament on the motion of thanks to the president's address, he termed Islamabad's raising of human rights issue in Kashmir in Geneva as totally uncalled for. The prime minister has said that Pakistan has no locus standi in the state other than that of an aggressor. The motion was later adopted by both the houses after rejecting all opposition amendments, including one by division in Rajya Sabha. In his hour-long reply marked by repeated thumping of desks by treasury benches, the prime minister referred to the resolution on Kashmir passed by Parliament and said it fully reflected the determination of the nation on the Kashmir issue.

Referring to the U.S. pronouncements recently, the prime minister said though there is improvement in Indo-U.S. relations in the economic and other spheres, the understanding has to be enhanced in certain areas. He said the home minister's statement in Parliament makes the government's position clear.

The prime minister announced that India and China are likely to achieve a breakthrough in resolving confrontation in areas along the Line of Actual Control.

The prime minister rejected the idea of carving out new states as it will open a Pandora's box. He, however, said measures have to be taken to remove the interstate economic disparities. Referring to the northeast, the prime minister said peace has been restored in the region except Manipur, where intratribal clashes have taken place. There also the situation has improved after the imposition of president's rule, he said.

On the Dunkel proposal, the prime minister reiterated that India has nothing to lose but much to gain as the farmers will be able to sell their produce in the international market and get more remunerative prices.

On Ayodhya, Mr. Rao said action will be initiated after the Supreme Court gives its ruling. He promised to take the house into confidence while taking action on this matter.

Expressing optimism on the country's economy, Mr. Rao declared that the government will increase investment in rural development by three folds. More than 1 lakh crore rupees will be spent for rural uplift in the next seven years. Stressing the need to increase the power supply, the prime minister said massive investment is being made in the sector. Rejecting the charges that foreign investment is coming only in the consumer sector, the prime minister said about 90 percent of foreign investment is in the core sector. He also reiterated the government's resolve to earmark 6 percent of the national income for education. He said the schemes announced by the government for women and unemployed youth have gathered momentum.

Delhi Protests to Pakistan, Bangladesh on Terrorism

BK0803163294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] India has lodged a strong protest with Pakistan and Bangladesh following the arrests of some of their nationals connected with terrorist activities in India.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said in New Delhi that the matter of four Pakistani and one Bangladeshi national apprehended by the police was taken up with their missions in New Delhi yesterday.

Iran

PRC, India Reject Tehran Call for Anti-U.S. Alliance

PM0803135394 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 7 Mar 94 pp1, 4

[Report by Amir Taheri: "China and India Reject Iran's Call for New Alliance"]

[Text] London—China and India have both rejected an Iranian call for a new Asian alliance against "U.S. hegemony over the world."

Both, however, have expressed willingness to purchase unspecified quantities of national gas from Iran and try to reschedule Iran's debts to them.

The Iranian proposal first came from President Hashemi-Rafsanjani at the beginning of PRC Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen's three-day visit which ended yesterday. Hashemi-Rafsanjani then made the same proposal to Indian Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh, who is currently in Tehran for economic talks.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani's plan calls for the creation of an axis through which Iran, Pakistan, India, the PRC, and Japan would form a bloc opposed to U.S. hegemony.

The Iranian president told his Chinese and Indian guests that Washington's current "provocations" against Japan on trade matters should persuade Japan to join such a grouping.

A senior Pakistani diplomat said yesterday that the Iranian idea is nothing more than "a far from serious illusion." He added that Hashemi-Rafsanjani last year suggested a similar plan when Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto visited Tehran.

A Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman said yesterday that his government had not received any Iranian official proposal for the formation of an Asian defense pact.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani had hoped to persuade Qichen and Singh to meet with their Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Velayati with a view to issuing a joint statement about the creation of the "new axis," but the two ministers refused to meet with one another. A highly-placed Iranian diplomat said that "the initiative did not evoke the required reactions, but we made good progress on the Kashmir issue." After meeting with Singh, Hashemi-Rafsanjani dropped his traditional calls for the full implementation of the UN resolutions on Kashmir. Intead he supported New Delhi's call for negotiations between India and Pakistan to resolve the issue "in the interest of the people of Kashmir and the entire region."

Iran is known to owe the PRC and India $2 billion and hopes the two countries will agree to reschedule the debts along the same lines as the agreement Tehran concluded with Bonn.

Iranian and Western diplomatic sources confirmed yesterday that both Qian Qichen and Singh explained to the Iranian leaders that their countries will not cooperate with Iran militarily unless Iran pays what it owes for past arms purchases.

Saudi-Linked Group Accused of Zahedan Bombings

NC0803172894 Paris AFP in English 1646 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Tehran, March 8 (AFP)—Sunni Muslim militants planted two bombs which exploded in the town hall and Shiite Muslim mosque of the Iranian town of Zahedan, the daily KAYHAN said Tuesday.

The paper did not say if the March 2 attack in the Sunni-majority town of southeast Iran close to the border with Pakistan caused any casualties or damage.

But it said security forces had arrested several members of the group "Sahab army" who had admitted responsibility for the attacks.

It was the first time that the fundamentalist Wahhabi group, which has close links to Saudi Arabia and is based in Pakistan, has been publicly blamed by Iranian authorities for an attack in Iran.

Numerous attacks on the Shiite community in Pakistan have been attributed to the group.

Zahedan with 350,000 inhabitants is one of the main Sunni towns in Iran, a country where 80 percent of the population is Shiite.

At least six people were killed in violent clashes between Sunni demonstrators and security forces in Zahedan last month during a protest against the destruction of a Sunni mosque in northeast Iran, reliable sources said.

The Iranian media has since January warned of the risk of attacks in the region by Wahhabi fundamentalists, charging that they were backed by Iran's main armed opposition movement, the Mojahedin-e Khalq.

Indian Foreign Minister Visits Government Officials

BK0903071294 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 8 Mar 94

[Text] Pakistan's efforts to internationalize the Kashmir issue has suffered a setback. Two of its close neighbors Iran and China have advised Islamabad to seek a dialogue with New Delhi to solve the issue which they have said is a bilateral matter.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent recording] Iranian and Chinese backing of India's position on Kashmir came during the visit of [Indian] External Affairs Minister [Dinest Singh] to Teheran. The Iranian president, 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, told Mr. Dinesh Singh that Teheran wants that Pakistan should hold direct talks with India to solve the Kashmir issue. The Indian minister also held talks with his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Velayati and apprised him of the latest situation in the Kashmir valley. Mr. Velayati felt that there was much scope for cooperation between India, China, and Iran on a regional basis. Later, the Indian minister also held talks with his Chinese counterpart, Mr. Qian Qichen, who was in Teheran on Sunday [March 6]. Mr. Qichen described Pakistan's tabling of the Kashmir issue at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva as being out of context. He said Beijing favors a solution of the Kashmir issue within the framework of the Simla accord. The Indian foreign secretary, Mr. K. Srinivasan, at the end of the Teheran visit said that both China and Iran agreed with India that human rights should not be used by nations as a political tool.

[Srinivasan] This was to have a successful joint commission meeting but it so happened that it was coincident with the ongoing round at Geneva and also coincidental to the Chinese foreign minister's visit to Teheran. It gave us an opportunity to present our point of view at foreign minister's level and I think that our point of view has been well received in both capitals, or rather in Teheran and by the Chinese foreign minister's delegation. [end recording]

Hashemi Addresses Meeting of African Diplomats

LD0803214694 Tehran IRNA in English 2022 GMT 8 March 94

[Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—First Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Hashemi said at the gathering of African diplomats in Tehran that the Islamic Republic wishes to broaden relations with African countries.

Hashemi who was addressing a reception at the embassy of Sudan said since the triumph of the Islamic revolution in 1979, Iran has been a friendly country to all African states, and supports the struggle of African peoples against racial discrimination.

He said the Africans have added a golden leaf to the history of the struggles of world nations, and today certain sources that claim to be concerned about the status of human rights accuse certain African states of human rights violations while they continue to plunder the resources of the very same African countries.

He said the Islamic Republic looks forward to broader cooperation with the African nations in the area of politics, economy and culture.

Tajik Opposition Leader Comments on Situation

NC0903091794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 9 Mar 94

[Text] The head of the Tajik opposition delegation has stressed that the opposition believes that an impartial interim government should assume power and hold free elections to end the current crisis.

Speaking in an interview in Tehran yesterday, Akbar Turjanzadeh said: A popular rule that the Tajik people want should be established through free elections.

He described the role played by the Islamic Republic of Iran in solving the Tajikistan crisis as noteworthy and said: During our talks in Tehran with the Russian Government delegation, it was agreed that the first round of talks for the solution of the Tajikistan crisis be held in Moscow with the participation of representatives from the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the United Nations.

In conclusion, he called for the active role of the Islamic Conference Organization in solving the Tajikistan crisis.

No 'Serious Resolution' Expected From UN on Hebron

NC0903113894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 9 Mar 94

[Commentary by News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] The UN Security Council will possibly issue a resolution on the tragic massacre of the worshipers at the al-Ibrahimi shrine in al-Khalil. It is 12 days since this shocking tragedy took place, and despite extensive regional and international reaction condemning it, the continuation of strong protests by the Palestinians, and the unprecedented clashes between the Zionist occupiers and the oppressed Palestinians, the UN Security Council has refrained from issuing a resolution on this.

The only thing that has prevented this resolution has been U.S. opposition to the condemnation of the Zionist regime's unprecedented crime in the massacre of worshipers. Despite fundamental changes in the international balance of power with the end of the cold war and the disintegration of the Eastern bloc, one can see that UN decisions do not go beyond the traditional frameworks based on alliances and that criteria such as justness and humanity, as well as true security, have not found their suitable place in UN decisions.

Even though the United States feigns to be a mere observer in the so-called Arab-Israeli compromise talks and should thus take an impartial approach to incidents, it has impudently adopted a pro- Zionist policy vis-a-vis a calamity, the condemnation of which no one has the least bit of doubt, and is ignoring world public opinion.

This stance by the White House stems from the fact that on the basis of international laws and the conventions on war, prisoners of war, and occupied territories, especially the Fourth Convention of Geneva, the Zionist regime is legally responsible for ensuring the security of the residents in the occupied territories. If the Zionist regime is unwilling or unable to ensure the security of the Palestinians, it should hand over this duty to international organizations. Since the Zionist regime wants to crush the risen Palestinians, on the one hand, and does not want a third party to enter the scene in order to cover up its crimes, on the other, it opposes the dispatch of UN peacekeeping forces to the occupied territories. Thus, the United States, which regards the Zionist regime's behavior to be part of the confrontation with the wave of Islamism and the Islamic revolution and in line with its own and the Zionist regime's interests, extends unconditional support for this regime.

However, behind the U.S.-Zionist regime's confrontation with the wave of Islamism and the just uprising of the Palestinians, talks are being held in the UN corridors between the United States and the compromising Palestinian faction on the one side and the Zionist regime and 'Arafat's representative on the other. Egypt also plays the role of mediator in these talks.

Political experts consider the issuance of a Security Council resolution on this issue to be contingent on a compromise between Tel Aviv and 'Arafat on the Palestinian demands on what should be stated in the resolution. The Palestinian side—which has been greatly disgraced among the Palestinians because of its recent compromise on self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, as well as ensuing agreements—has lost its support, is propounding demands that ultimately benefit the Zionist regime, and is trying to slightly repair its domestic image. Thus, it wants the resolution to emphasize international support for Palestinians and to clarify the situation of Jerusalem.

However, experts believe that Israel will not give in to these two demands and, in view of U.S. support for the Zionist regime and the composition of the Security Council, no serious resolution is expected to be issued.